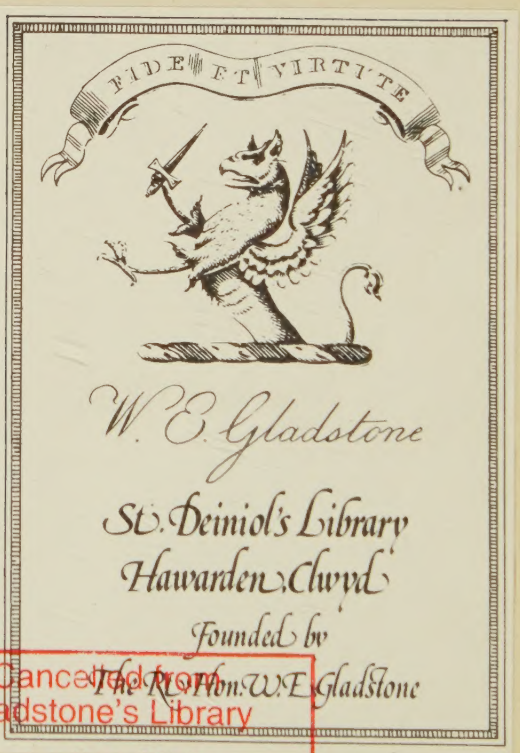
THE TRUE PATRIOTISM

W. E. ORCHARD, D.D.



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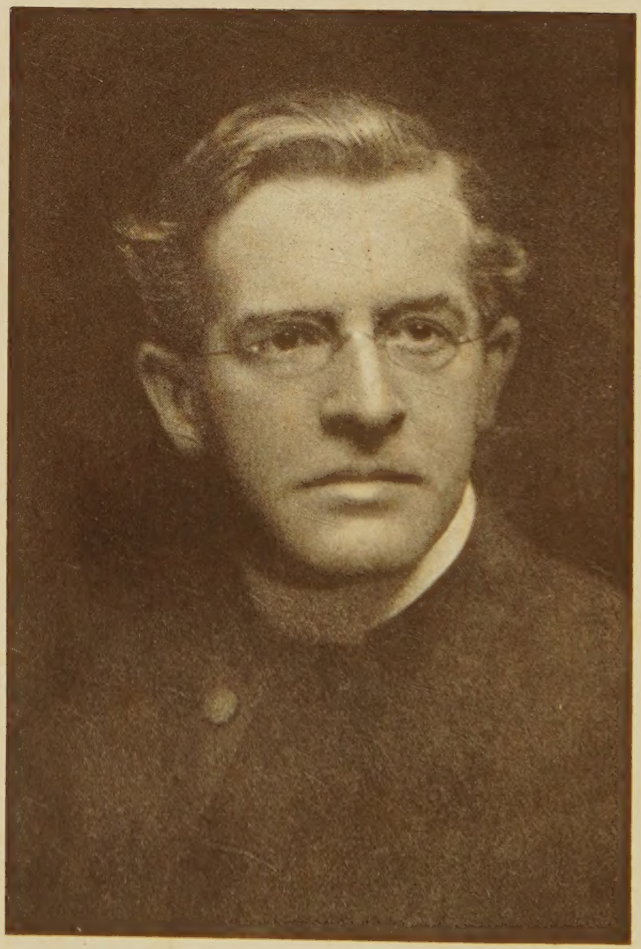

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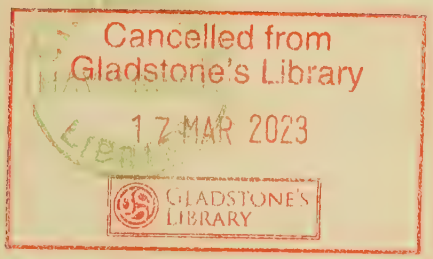
THE TRUE PATRIOTISM AND OTHER SERMONS

BY THE

REV. W. E. ORCHARD, D.D.



LONDON: GEORGE ALLEN & UNWIN LTD.
RUSKIN HOUSE 40 MUSEUM STREET, W.C. 1

First published in 1918

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PRAYER

We praise Thee, O our Father, for this world and its witness of Thee; for sunshine, wind and rain, and all weathers; for the wide-bosomed sea and the everlasting hills, for high sailing clouds and clear shining stars, for springing grass and flowers and tall stately trees, for lakes and streams and all waters. Help us to drink to the full of the beauty and strength of the world and to know that they come from Thee as gifts of love to us.

We praise Thee for man and for his making in Thine image; for the strange light in his eyes, for his wonderful face, his mighty mind and his deathless soul; for his lordship of creation, his power to conquer nature, his skill to plant and build, to fashion and create, to paint and sing; for the memories of greatness that abide his fall, for the grace of forgiveness that restores his soul, for the cords of love that bind him to Thy will. Hasten the day of redemption, when our last enemy shall be trodden under foot, and Thou shalt call the son of man to share Thine everlasting throne.

We praise Thee for the sacrament of Life; for its great adventure, its glorious opportunities, its zeal, its triumph, its desire; for the things that point beyond themselves to a spiritual realm from which they take their rise, for the failures that quicken better hopes, the pains and sorrows and sins that spur us on to search for health and comfort and redemption, for death that wakens thoughts of immortality, for unfulfilled desire that anchors us to Thee; for all ministries of the infinite, the beauty of common things, the light of heaven upon our daily path, Thy glory in the face of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit's witness in the soul of man.

Now we know that all things are through and for and unto Christ, and in Him all things are ours. Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts, Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory. Glory be to Thee, O Lord most High. Amen.

How shall we Commend Christianity to this Generation?

"In pureness, in knowledge, in longsuffering, in kindness, in the Holy Ghost, in love unfeigned, in the word of truth, in the power of God."—2 CORINTHIANS vi. 6, 7.

THE continuance of Christianity as a religious system might easily appear to be in considerable danger, if we were to take a superficial and circumscribed view of the modern situation. In common with all other religions, it may be granted a national tenacity which in the absence of any catastrophic event might secure its continuance for centuries as a form of worship and a set of customs: for historically nothing is so persistent as a religion. We might therefore conclude that Christianity will persist alongside the other great systems—Buddhism, Hinduism, and Mahommedanism. But from the Christian point of view that would not be reckoned to be persistence at all. Simply to persist as they persist, and alongside them as one like them, would mean that Christianity had lowered its

claims and altered its character. It is because Christianity makes such great claims that it stands in a position of greater danger. It is discredited if it cannot win all men to its acceptance; its efficiency can be challenged much more easily than in the case of other religions. Christianity is blamed because it has allowed such a hideous social system to develop amongst us, and at the present moment it is condemned because it has proved utterly unable to save the world from a catastrophe like the war. But Mahommedanism could not be blamed for war; for it admits it as a holy necessity: nor Hinduism for cruel social customs; for it does not profess to concern itself with such things. And, once more, Christianity stands in a more exposed position because its habitat is the Western world. It has had to meet the fierce impact of modern thought, which has dared to question the validity of all religion.

The confusing element in the situation is that Christianity is very little understood within the area of Christendom, and even by those who sincerely profess it. There was before the war a considerable defection from organized Christianity to the new semi-religious cults, but in most cases one could assume that those attracted to them, even if they understood the new religion they embraced, certainly understood very little of the religion they had rejected.

It is in view of such circumstances as these that we who are Christians and believe that our religion is the truth and the one hope of mankind have to ask ourselves how we are to commend that religion to our age. There are three main needs to be met if we are to gain the ear of the present generation.

A Clear and Convincing Presentation in Thought.

1. This always has been, and remains, an initial necessity.

(*a*) That need not mean that it is the most fundamental or impressive.

We are all quite convinced that Christianity is a way of life, that religion is apprehended by something deeper than the intellect, and that a holy and powerful personality is the best agent for propagating the faith.

The majority of people are not intellectual, and are quite incapable of appreciating philosophical and logical arguments; so that the most perfect system in the world would leave them quite untouched.

Then we have to allow for the fact that an impression is abroad among Christian people that clear thinking does not matter. It often conceals itself under a distaste for theology and the cant that theology is not necessary. The fault is

partly due to theologians, who will not take the trouble to make themselves understandable, or who do not concern themselves sufficiently with the great fundamental issues; so that theology presents itself to the plain man as a jumble of apparently unimportant assertions, which are themselves without an adequate basis.

(*b*) But to ignore its necessary place would be fatal.

Though so many people are not intellectual at all, there is a basis of mind in every one which has to be satisfied. It is quite possible to ignore this, and for a time people can be swept in by their emotions. But that proves in the end as worthless as attempting to make people Christians by coercion. A demand for clearness and consistency, of which the person himself may be almost unconscious, soon makes itself felt, and if this is not satisfied, everything is lost. Faith must be reinforced by knowledge, for faith is itself an intuition of truth and craves a clear content; to imagine that faith is something that can dispense with the question of whether a thing is true is to be in confusion as to what faith is. There is no other faith but faith in the truth. Therefore, faith cannot be awakened unless truth is presented which can afterwards be tested in every direction; the person who presents it must have that truth very clear to himself, and the Person

in whom faith ultimately reposes must be Himself the Truth.

Moreover, many of the people who are being lost to us to-day are being lost through this neglect of the intellectual side. The appeals which are made from the pulpit are often described as only fit for the Sunday School; the real condemnation is that they are not fit for the Sunday School and have gone far to ruin it. The pulpit not only forgets the level of education has risen, but it forgets that if people are not intellectual they are intelligent, and if they are not intelligent they can be made to understand far more than is generally assumed. We are losing from organized Christianity to-day thousands of people who would have been saved from wandering in mists and tumbling into swamps if only they had been given some indication of the great intellectual foundations of Christianity, its underlying principles of truth; for although Christianity presents us with a Person as the object of faith, it is this which rests on a principle that has only to be stated to carry almost universal conviction.

And though it is a very small class which for the lack of a clear intellectual presentation cannot accept Christianity, this class is a very important one. And although the intellectual conviction that Christianity is true does not make a man a Christian, yet in many cases an intellectual

conversion has to precede the conversion of the heart; not only at the entrance to Christianity, but in order to reach the higher experiences. Make no mistake about it. The mystical experience is not a substitute for intellectual conviction, for in the greatest instances it only follows after the severest intellectual exercise, in which every step is tested and made sure as one ascends.

2. The present conditions are peculiarly favourable for an intellectual advance.

(*a*) We are no longer fighting a defensive battle.

Twenty years ago we were struggling with what seemed to be an advancing tide of materialism. To-day that tide has everywhere receded, and made the defence no longer an acute necessity. The defence which was conducted from the side of Christianity was poor, because it was not recognized that Christianity was a reconciliation of spiritualism and materialism, and not the mere opposite of materialism; but we need not go into that, save to notice that we have more to fear to-day from an anti-material spiritualism than from materialism itself, although we still have to counter a practical materialism left over from the once all-prevailing theory. A similar position might be outlined with regard to the once so prevalent agnosticism. It is gnosticism that has become the present danger.

(*b*) The world of thought now affirms the deepest principle of Christianity.

That principle is the principle of personality. The philosophies of previous generations were taken up with the absoluteness of the Idea, the abstract nature of truth, a static and undifferentiated unity. Christianity was fitted into this scheme only at considerable loss of freedom and power, if not, as some alleged, of its very essence. Now everything has changed, and a principle has been affirmed which has given Christianity room to breathe, namely, the principle that personality is absolute. It is held not only in philosophy, but in psychology, and it is maintained to be the goal of progress, the end of society, and the test of every system, religious or economic. It seems to promise a synthesis of past opposites, it has an amazing simplicity of appeal, and is capable of an infinite extension and application.

Here Christianity does seem to find ready to its hand what is obviously its own basic principle. The God that Christianity proclaims is not only personal, but is the absolute example of perfect personality subsisting in a perfect social unity, so that the doctrine of the Trinity, once so difficult to understand, looks as if it might become simple, understandable, and axiomatic. The revelation of God to which Christianity points as final, because it contains within itself a principle of infinite

apprehension, is a revelation in a Person, unified within Himself and able to unite all men together by uniting them to Himself. The redemption which Christianity recommends is the salvation of personality by personality. The end to which it looks is a communion of saints, a perfect society of perfected personalities; a state which is at the same time a goal of rest and the ground of endless progress.

Here is an atmosphere of thought in which Christianity can positively luxuriate, in which it can state its case with joy and abandon. The very doctrines that looked as if they must always cramp the mind and deny freedom to thought are discerned to be doors that open outward; the only ways it is true, but because they are the only ways out of prison; a strait and narrow way, it may be, but a way that leads to eternal life.

But, valuable as this all is, something more is needed.

An Attractive and Compelling Embodiment in Character.

1. The importance of character has always been recognized.

(*a*) The apologetics of Christianity is to be found in its saints.

Despite all the wrong ideals of sainthood which have been allowed to grow up through an imperfect

understanding of Christianity itself; despite the black record of the past and the inconsistencies of Christians, the proof of the power of Christianity in this direction is sufficient. It has been able to transform character in every age, of every type, no matter what depths of degradation had been reached. If we have really found the psychological explanation of conversion, we still have to look to Christianity as the greatest agent in effecting it. So long as Christianity can transform character and manufacture saints, it will live.

(*b*) We have come to clearer understanding of what marks the saint.

The process of official canonization has had two evils: it has obscured the fact that all Christians are called to be saints, and, in the New Testament, are actually called saints in virtue of that calling; and it has sometimes canonized persons as saints who, however famed for their service to the Church or for their piety, were not only defective in character, but cruel and cunning. But, on the other hand, good evidence was demanded. A saint had not only to be good according to the ethical judgment of his times, and in some respects at least to surpass it, but he had also to be orthodox and a worker of miracles; conditions that we can widen to mean, one who held clearly the great principles of Christianity and who also had power over human nature and nature itself. It was

also clearly recognized that this character came from a complete abandonment of self to God and was one that all should follow and desire to become.

2. We only want to intensify and develop the ideal.

(*a*) The ordinary Christian is too much contented with the negative side of sainthood.

This side is not to be despised. The power to avoid the gross and aggressive sins is not something that is to be reckoned as little, because it can be called negative. It would be easy to construct a social order if we could guarantee that people would not break across the bounds of sobriety, purity, the rightful possessions of others. It is the existence of these things which bases society upon force and keeps among us the argument for war. If most Christians are law-abiding, decent citizens, Christianity has done a great service to society. We all recognize that from the Christian point of view it is little, but it is a necessary beginning. We may despise *mere* morality, but that is not the same thing as despising morality.

The Christian will go much further than to abstain from those sins which are recognized as sins against society and are universally reproved; he will abstain from many other things which are not frowned down upon. He will not be worldly, too concerned about money, or resent

an attack made upon him. Some of us have not got so far as this yet, but it is getting better understood to be necessary. No one supposes that you can be a "saint" in the special sense without having advanced as far as this.

But there must be not only abstinence from evil; there must be the possession of active virtues. There must not only be an inoffensive character, but one that is kind; not only a long-suffering which consumes the evil that falls upon himself, but returns it as love, a love which the apostle describes as without any taint of hypocrisy, that is, a love which is real and not assumed. Therefore, the Christian saint must be not simply one of whom a decent sort of society can be constructed, but one who himself constructs society, making up for the deficiencies of others and transforming social wrecks and social dangers into persons like himself.

It is useful to notice that a good deal of this may be done by one who is not a Christian. We must seek, therefore, the differentia. It must be, *in addition* to all these things, the power to minister God to men, to heal the deep longing of the heart; and for this purpose to be utterly consumed by God and for man. It means a hiding of the self, so that the whole personality becomes a medium for the personality of God to create and recreate mankind. It is this change in the character of

the self which is the differentia—not selflessness, nor mere unselfishness, but the power to convey God Himself to the very self of man, comforting, healing, making anew. This is the great thing, but we are all called to be that. It is a life which has no limits, but it is the only thing worth living for, the only ambition that is pure, and the only satisfaction of the human heart.

This *is* enough, but to-day it needs a special application.

An Adaptable Example of a True Society.

1. This is the new demand which Christianity must meet if it is to serve the present age.

(*a*) It has always been implicit in Christianity. The idea that Christianity only concerns the individual is not only untrue to the Gospel, but it is impossible in fact. The new insistence on personality does not mean a swing back to individualism. It is recognized that personality is both a social product and a social creator. There could not be a single person, it is unthinkable. The Christian doctrine of God has recognized that. But neither could there be a person who was not continually creating that which was like to himself. Therefore, the Gospel must prove not merely to have a social application, but to be itself, without any manipulation or adaptation, the Gospel for society. And every-

where it will be found that the Christian doctrines demand a social embodiment. The Trinity is the model for the only society that shall not perish everlastingly; the Incarnation is the only way by which that which is fallen may be uplifted; there must be a going down into the condition of the fallen, and, without position, priviiege, or power not available for the person who has to be lifted, the great return must be made. The Cross shows how when evil breaks into aggression against the good it is to be met, turned, and destroyed. In so far from Christianity being inapplicable to society, it is much more true to say that none but a society can give it a perfect embodiment. Here the insistence of Jesus upon the Kingdom reminds us that we are in the line of His central thought.

(*b*) It is the actual creation of a social order which shall itself set forth Christianity that is now the critical task.

A great deal is done when a Church can be formed where men of every social status meet together as equals; that is an ideal which it is still worth striving for to make perfect. But it is not enough. If we can meet together for religious fellowship there must surely be a desire to perfect that fellowship and extend it through all life. Much is accomplished by leavening society with the principles of Christianity, and it

ought never to be forgotten that at least sections of the Church have been inspirers of the democratic idea. But the need of the hour has passed beyond mere friendliness, beyond democracy, and now demands a basis of economic fellowship. We have in the Acts of the Apostles, recorded surely not as a warning but as an example, something that looks very like a form of communism as the original expression of Christianity along economic lines; which again monasticism along a limited line made actually binding. And Jesus does seem to have expected that His Society would organize itself along lines appropriate to its faith, and, without waiting for the world to conform, would set it an example in clear distinction and even antithesis to the prevailing order of the world.

2. It is by a concerted advance along all three lines that we shall commend Christianity in a most convincing way.

(*a*) These lines have been unconnected before. Thought, saintship, reform have rarely been found together. The theologian has dared to put forth some great work which has been much more convincing than his character. It is said that St. Thomas Aquinas, writing the "Summa," had the heavenly vision, and laid down his pen for ever. The new type of theologian would perhaps not begin his work until he had had this

experience, and only in the light of that would dare to write. It is the heart that makes the theologian. Some modern saints, especially, have apparently needed an eternal drawing-room for their only possible setting; they have not felt that as a means of achieving the highest saintship they must not only stoop to the lowest conditions, but must lift those conditions up. And social reformers have rather boasted that they were themselves not professing to be saints and did not need that people should be saints in order to enable their schemes to prove workable.

(*b*) The Holy Ghost and the power of God are needed for this very thing.

We recognize that for the great materials of a Christian theology we have to look for His inspiration. The truth of God can only be found by His aid from whom all illumination comes. And He comes not only as light to the mind but as flame to the heart, smelting and refining and moulding the nature into the image of God. But His work does not stop there. It is especially the work of the Holy Spirit to create fellowship. There is an enlightenment going on among Christians as to the right kind of economic order that would enable the material basis of life to serve the perfect purpose of the Creator; but what is wanted is power, the power of Pentecost. The new society will have to be born again, as souls

are born again. There may be a catastrophic revolution needed. The way for that will have to be prepared by mental insight and clear understanding; but for the carrying it into effect there will be needed a great baptism of the Spirit, not only clearing away selfishness and fear, but giving us power to create from the chaos and darkness of our time a world of order and light.

Christianity, the True Humanitarianism

"There is . . . one mediator . . . between God and men, Himself man, Christ Jesus."—1 TIMOTHY ii. 5.

HUMANITARIANISM *ought* to mean the Religion of Humanity: the belief that humanity is the highest reality and the ethics which follow from that. The Religion of Humanity, the creation of the French philosopher, Comte, is unfortunately called Positivism. But it is a most wonderful creation, and it is remarkable that it has had so little success; for apart from Christianity it is the only religion that is worth a moment's consideration. It proposes that Humanity, the common nature we all share, is a sufficient substitute for the speculative idea of God. It can be worshipped, it can comfort and support us in times of trouble, it is something for which we can work and hope. Humanity can be easily idealized in those persons in whom we recognize the principle of humanity to have

been incarnated; indeed there is nothing that supernatural religion has professed to provide that it cannot give us.

Its failure to attract, especially now, when every one is looking round for a new religion, is difficult to account for. Something is perhaps due to the dry and difficult presentation of the founder's thought and the lack of personal attraction in Comte himself. Perhaps the bankruptcy at the heart of the system is unconsciously discerned; all the more so since it is put forward as a complete parallel with Catholicism, with a church, a calendar of saints, and a priesthood; a parallel which invites damaging comparisons. As Boutroux has wittily said, the saints who secure a place in the Positivist calendar owe their position to the fact that they did not believe this religion.

Humanitarianism is the name that is given, not to a religion at all, but to an ethic: the ethic which would make humane conduct an all-sufficient standard for life. It is an ethic that might be adopted by any Christian, but it will usually be found that professed humanitarians are those who have lost faith in all religion in general, and are antagonistic to Christianity in particular. The tendency of humanitarianism is to concern

itself with the more obvious forms of physical suffering, and with the suffering inflicted on animals even more than with the sufferings inflicted on men. Its opposition to Christianity is due to the fact that Christianity has sanctioned human torture and seems almost unconscious of the sufferings of the animal world; so that Buddhists can call Christendom "the hell of animals." The appeal to put an end to animal suffering is made to rest on the ground either that the animals are nearer to us than is generally believed—that they have souls—or to the fact that man is nearer to the animals than he thinks —that we have only the same principle of animal life in us: as it is expressed in the favourite but meaningless phrase, "All life is one."

But the existence of such systems is a grave reproach against Christianity. They show how little Christians know about the religion they profess, and how unfaithful they are to the principles to which they are committed. When God is presented as a Being who from some Olympian height issues arbitrary commands which thus constitute wrong and right, and which we have simply to obey, and to whom human suffering is of no concern beside the accuracy of one's creed, it is not to be wondered at that men should

revolt against the very idea of God. But we are going to show that Christianity is a religion of humanity and does demand a humanitarian ethic.

Christianity gives the Highest Place to Humanity.

1. This cannot be done by affirming man to be the Supreme Being.

(*a*) That affirmation is wrecked upon two unshakable facts.

Man is conscious of something greater than himself. It does not matter whether that is called the Ideal, or God, or the Superman; it is the most prominent fact of the developed human consciousness. Man is aware of his limitations, physical, mental, and spiritual. For a time he may be happy in creating an ideal of what he might be, but only in the end to throw into relief the fact of how far short he falls. Even if he wants to deify himself, he has to say that man is the only God, or that we ought to labour to evolve the superman. Why not be content with the word "man"? He cannot, for man as he is he knows to be less than the highest possibility. Whether God exists or not, the idea

of God will haunt the mind of man so long as man exists.

If man is the highest conscious being, then there is certainly something superior to him in power, namely nature. It matters not how much he prates and poses, nature comes down at last and crushes him out of existence. We cannot appeal to Paschal's saying that man remains superior because, while man is conscious of his defeat, nature is unconscious of its victory; for man is not supposed to be conscious after death on this theory. And Nietzsche's suggestion that man should deliberately will what nature does, and so proclaim his superiority, is the thinnest pretence that has ever been offered as the solution of our tragedy. For if unconscious nature has by some fatal chemical combination produced a conscious being, there is no relief from the appalling tragedy that existence presents; a tragedy that will only become more manifest as man gets more conscious and realizes that nature which has called him forth can neither understand nor satisfy him.

(*b*) This cannot be evaded by declaring humanity to be supreme.

Humanity is nothing apart from the individuals who make up mankind: humanity is not conscious.

The consciousnesses of all individuals do not make up a total consciousness. There is no more a soul and a consciousness attaching to humanity as such than there is a person answering to a composite photograph. To say that humanity lives though individuals die, is not so true as to say that while *they* come into existence, *it* never does.

Humanity is an abstract idea. It exists only in the minds of individuals as an ideal representation of those features which they can group from the various individuals they know. To personify this is a dangerous delusion; and the danger of it may be seen in the modern tendency to personify society, or the State, or the nation, and then expect action from them such as we can expect from individuals. The whole world is destroying itself to-day because it is personifying nationalities.

This is not a mere philosophical subtlety, on which nothing practical depends. Humanity cannot provide us with a reliable ethical standard. We each select the types that we consider constitute humanity, and then we are surprised at what men can do under necessity of war. A few intoxicated poets and rhetoricians can declare that the world is divided into Germans and

human beings, or say that our enemies are outside the pale of humanity. But the fact is that they *are* human beings, and they are what all human beings are bound to become, if they worship a personified State or make their nationality their god. And we see how ambiguous the standard of humanity is when we hear people frankly excusing lust or vengeance, by saying that it is only human nature.

2. Humanity is only truly exalted in the doctrine of the Incarnation.

(*a*) But that must be held in the full Scriptural and catholic sense.

There must be no idea of a mere device consequent on human sin. The Incarnation was the purpose which underlay creation, both of the world and of man. "All things have been created through Him and unto Him." Therefore some theologians have held that the Incarnation would have taken place even if there had been no sin. Sin did not necessitate the Incarnation, but only the issue of it in the Cross. It has been held by others that we ought not to say that God became man, but keep to the Scriptural statement that the Word became flesh; for God always contained humanity within Himself. Christ is the Man from heaven, and it was in the image of His

humanity that man himself was made. If this is speculative, it is still the Catholic doctrine that he who was truly God is to be affirmed as also truly man; therefore God and man are not incompatible descriptions, for we may affirm them of one and the same Person.

The Incarnation must not be conceived as any deprivation or diminution of the Divine essence. It was in the flesh that we saw the glory of the Only-begotten. It was as man that God was truly Himself. Whatever attributes of Deity were laid aside or no longer exercised, what was retained was that which constitutes Godhead. We may reverently think that only as man could God show forth in uttermost purity that which constitutes His Godhead, for here He is seen to be love alone. If this is speculation, then we can find all we desire to claim in the Catholic faith that the man Christ Jesus is to be truly described and worshipped as God.

Neither must the Incarnation be conceived as a temporary assumption. What God assumed He for ever retains. If there was any change in the Godhead through the Incarnation, again a speculative point, the change remains. The eternal Word was not called Jesus Christ before the Incarnation; He is called Jesus Christ for ever

now. The name that is above every name is a human name. It is the great argument of the Epistle to the Hebrews that He wears our human nature as the vesture of His priesthood, and St. Paul even dares to speak of the *body* of glory which is now His. We can only represent what this may mean in symbol, but we can claim in reality that our human nature is represented in the Deity, and that man with God is on the throne.

(*b*) The greatest consequences follow from these careful definitions of the Catholic faith.

The seal of Divine glory has been placed upon human nature. The greatness of God is not to be looked for in the sea or the stars, nor yet in thought or the idea, but in humanity and in our flesh. It was this striving life and this suffering flesh that He chose to show forth all His glory.

We have a perfect representation of our humanity in the Godhead. When the agnostic asks, not only how *we* can understand God, but what is more important, how *He* can understand us, and when the free-thinker or the rebel declares that one fallen woman is more worshipful than a God who has never known this life and its temptations, I have no answer unless I hold the doctrine of the Incarnation. It alone meets the modern humanistic

temper. We are ruled by one of ourselves. Christianity is not only a theocracy, it is a democracy; a theodemocracy.

All that the Religion of Humanity has craved is here, and with better sanction. We may worship man in Christ Jesus; and in Him we worship man knowing what we mean. He is Man, the archetypal and all-embracing man. In Christianity Humanity is no longer an abstraction. It is personal, conscious, and the informing soul of all; for Christ is the light that lighteth all; He is the Humanity from which we derive, by which we live, and in which humanity is made divine. For us the centre and head and goal of all things is not a God who is only apart from and above mankind, nor yet one who is lost in humanity, a mere abstract or total of mankind; but one who is both God and Humanity.

Christianity inspires a true Humanitarian Ethic.

1. Here we have a still worse misunderstanding to correct.

(*a*) The Christian emphasis on the spiritual has been taken to involve contempt for the physical and the secular.

The precious doctrine that suffering can be

accepted for great ends, and that spiritual freedom can be enjoyed in bondage, has been perverted to mean that all suffering is redemptive and freedom does not matter.

The confident conviction that there is another life, which is the perfect consummation and compensation for this, has been perverted to mean that this life is unimportant.

The insistence on the difference between men and animals is taken to mean that animals cannot feel and that they have no rights.

(*b*) But these are perversions, for they have no sanction in our faith.

The Christian attitude to physical suffering is falsely applied. It is true that you can have the conscious presence of God while you are being tortured and that this makes it possible to bear any torture; but that does not involve that you can have the consciousness that God is with you *when you are torturing some one else.* We are taught that we are not to fear those that kill the body: we are *not* taught that we are not to fear to kill the body. Lazarus is told that he is going to get compensation in the next world and that he need not envy Dives; but Dives is not told that it will make no difference to him that he while on earth waxed rich while others went poor.

The attitude of our Lord to suffering is very clear. He brushed aside all theories of desert or origin ; He indulged in no mysticisms, but looked upon the thing as evil and put forth His mighty powers to bring it to an end. He was torn with compassion at what men suffered ; He would raise the dead to dry a woman's tears.

The concentration on the physical sufferings of the cross, even though exaggerated and morbid, is a right instinct. The physical sufferings of Christ are a factor in redemption, and were no small part of the price that He was prepared to pay. It is of profound significance that it was not under the spiritual agony of the garden that He gave way, but under the physical agony of the cross. The cry of dereliction is a great mystery, and to many has been a stumbling-block ; but to me it remains, even though I cannot understand it, the most precious word that ever fell from His lips. Among other things He bore for us was the eclipse of the mind under the pressure of pain.

2. These principles call for a new application to-day.

(*a*) Especially in view of the proposed Christian sanction of warfare.

It is true that our brave, brilliant youth have

been willing to offer themselves to wounds and agonies, to death and to the prospect of a life worse than death. Before their incessant devotion and laughing courage one is dumb. But one cannot help thinking of what that agony means, and asking continually if it is necessary, just because of its agony. And one has to remember that war is not only the willingness to suffer agony; it is also the willingness to inflict it. One is bound to ask, too, whether the end to be gained is worth this, and whether the things they are dying to save are worth salvation. They are not as our politicians and our Press expound them. If a man can witness that agony and not ask such questions, he has become a monster.

One remembers thankfully the psychological fact that there is never more suffering in the world than any one consciousness can hold; that the vast illimitable agonies of the battlefield must not be totalled up, because there is no one who feels the total. Yet, is there not? Does not Christ feel it all, and ought not those to feel it who profess to live near Him and to be members of His Body? If we were willing to feel that, could we be as callous as we are? I would sooner suffer all the bondage and insult that all the tyrants of the world could invent, and be born again into all the oppressed nation-

alities that there are, than that men should suffer this for me.

If these facts do not appeal, and if they can be turned by some subtle mysticism that I cannot refute, there are some undeniable facts which may appeal. How much longer and how much more will men be willing to suffer thus? Do not ask those who are safe at home, those who have not yet suffered, or those who are not likely to be sent back again; but ask the men who have suffered and who are to suffer again whether they are willing to go on: ask *them*.

(*b*) But these principles challenge much more than war.

Christian people must face the whole question of the sufferings of the animal world, whether for food, clothing, or research. We need not do that on the assumption that animals have souls, or that we have no more than they. We need not even plead the animals as our main concern; we can simply ask what effect it has upon men who have to inflict the suffering. It is not bullocks, but butchers, that we are thinking of. And we need not go outside Christianity to find a true friendship with animals, as in the example of St. Francis, who brothered even the wolf, or beyond St. Paul, who held that when the sons of God shall at last appear the whole

creation that groans and travails in pain until now will share in their redemption.

It is this principle that we have to apply to our industrial system. If it is essential to manufacture that we should have such towns as we possess, then a tent on the desert sands is to be preferred; and if the Bible is a sample, it is wonderful what thoughts of God and what expression of them a tented civilization could produce. If to cross the Atlantic in five days we must condemn men to work as stokers have to, would it not be better to be willing to go slowly in a sailing ship? The whole of our industrial system, which undoubtedly gives us great wealth and splendid conveniences, has still to be estimated on the basis of what it does for the human soul and what it exacts of suffering from man.

And we need not go outside Christianity for the strongest of all motives. We can still appeal to the motive of saving your soul and the necessity of living on different lines if that is to be achieved. Of old time men sought a monastic career in order to escape the wrath to come. With a wider idea of what salvation means, namely, not the escaping of hell, but the gaining of our full manhood for ourselves and for others in Christ, we can construct a wider order of life which shall carry the old ideals

further. It is only as we put this world right that we shall find the other world at all ; it is only as we bring the Kingdom of God on earth that we shall enjoy its eternal counterpart ; it is only as we enter into true economic relations with men that we shall find we have created spiritual friendships that will welcome us to the everlasting mansions when these shall fail.

Christianity, the True World-Religion

"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto myself."—JOHN xii. 32.

IT is a distinct advance that so many people now recognize that religion is an absolute necessity to man, and that a world-religion is alone adequate to the modern situation. Anthropological research reveals how fundamental, widespread, and creative religion is; so much so that if it were repressed or ignored it would revenge itself upon us in mysterious spiritual diseases or precipitate revolt and upheaval in the soul. Even the convinced atheist or materialist had better make some terms with the religious tendencies of his nature; for they will not be denied without disastrous effects. And now that the world is thrown together into such contact and intimacy we need a world-religion in order to prevent misunderstanding and strife; for it is perfectly right to charge religion with being one of the most prolific causes of war. There are two main causes

of war—religion and economics; but then they are the cause of almost everything else, good or evil. But the growing sense of world-brotherhood, the greater openmindedness of our age, the appreciation of ideas which have swayed centuries and sustained millions, demand a world religion to express and to hasten the coming unity.

Yet this advance, welcome as it is, seems to make considerable difficulties for Christianity. It had been predicted that the next great battle for the Christian faith would be on the ground of Comparative Religion; and that is already being fulfilled. Comparative Religion shows that there is a striking family likeness about all religions; they have similar ideas and even similar rites. This likeness was at first believed to be caused by actual borrowing or by indirect filiation; but this explanation has now had to be abandoned. We seem compelled to assume, at the lowest, that the human mind at certain stages thinks alike, or, at the highest, that there is such a thing as a general revelation. To many sympathetic souls this has brought a great relief. The intolerable idea that God only revealed Himself to one people, while He left all others in darkness, is gone. The judgment that one religion is true and all the rest false is disproved; it is now possible to believe that God has shown His love for all mankind by revealing to all sufficient measure of light to live by. Some persons have adopted more extreme

conclusions. They believe that all religions are equally true, that it does not matter what religion you profess, and therefore that the unique claims of Christianity are disproved, and all missionary enterprise ought to be abandoned. It has to be said, however, that these generalizations are somewhat hasty and are not as a rule founded on a scientific study of religions. Such conclusions are often motived more by hostility to Christianity than by friendliness to all religions. It is very rare that any one can be found who really understands *one* religion thoroughly, not even that which he professes; it is still rarer to find any one who knows even anything about *all* the great religious systems.

Efforts are now Being Made to Construct a World-Religion.

1. These are undertaken on the assumption that Christianity is unfitted for that position.

(*a*) Some of the objections to Christianity on this ground are very feeble.

It is apparently assumed that Christianity is a typically Western religion, and as such is quite unfitted for the East. The truth, of course, is that it is a distinctly Eastern religion, and it is almost more true to say that it has never been understood by the West. While some advanced theologians, recognizing that Christianity was

originally Eastern, hold that it has been corrupted by Hellenic philosophy and Roman institutions, and therefore seek to recommend it to us by restoring it to its primitive purity, advanced philosophers hold that the primitive form of Christianity is the most pernicious, because it draws from the tired spirit of the East, and is therefore temperamentally unfitted for the Western world, where its quasi-adoption and Westernization has only led to hypocrisy and confusion.

Or it is said that we cannot expect Christianity to conquer the other great religions. Religions are evolved in accordance with the needs of peoples, and to impose upon them an alien religion would provoke disaster to morals and faith. But the truth is that the great religions of the world are all conquering religions and have generally displaced the indigenous religions of the land. Mahommedanism suppressed the natural heathenism which preceded it; Buddhism sprang out of Hinduism and sought to supersede it; Christianity emerged within Judaism and then separated from it with considerable hostility. Few of the great world-religions flourish in the land of their birth; they seem to prefer an unprepared soil and are more eagerly supported by converts from other faiths.

(*b*) But some objections are more serious.

Christianity claims to be both unique and final, and that seems to be disproved by the discoveries of Comparative Religion and to contradict the

law of evolution. It is impossible that a religion which stands thus convicted of arrogance and exclusiveness should ever become the world-religion, while its profession of finality would only lead to stagnation when it was accepted. Though the conclusion is rarely faced, this means that Christianity can never be admitted into a brotherhood of religions or contribute much to an eclectic system.

It is also objected that Christianity has lamentably failed. It has failed to unite those who profess it, and has revealed a fatally fissiparous tendency, bifurcating into the irreconcilable oppositions of Catholic and Protestant; the one branch remaining rigid and immovable, the other developing an instability and dissidence which have reduced Christianity to chaos. It has failed to construct a social order, in accordance with its own principles, with the result that Christianity and Christendom are in complete contradiction; the Gospel being proclaimed alongside a system which denies it, and the Church being built upon a false compromise, which makes dishonesty, timidity, and weakness characteristics of all ecclesiasticism. Above all it has failed to eliminate war from civilization, and indeed has done much to drive it all the deeper in. Christianity is providing the last refuge and sanction of war. There are very few soldiers who believe in war; there are very few Churchmen who do not. The

Blood of Christ is being used to redecorate the fading glories of the shield of Mars, and the Cross is being lifted up as a standard for rallying the unwilling armies of Europe.

2. Therefore a new world-religion must be constructed on universal lines.

(*a*) There are three main types of effort.

It is suggested that we should return to the most primitive type of religion in order to arrive at real unity and regain the creative genius of religion. Originally religion consisted in communal Nature ceremonies which were performed without any theological implications, and we must restore religion along this line if we want to recover joy in life, real fellowship, and that inspiration without which the arts cannot live. These suggestions emanate from rather academic persons, and there is little likelihood that they will lead to any propagandist action.

On the other hand, it is recommended that we should turn to the highest evolution and most refined essence of all religions, if we want to discover that in which unity can be realized. It is held that all religions tend to teach pure theism and simple humanitarianism. If therefore we make the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man the rallying-point, and shed all other accretions, we shall possess a religion at once reasonable and sufficient for modern freedom and progress.

A much more ingenious suggestion is that we should extract from each religion its esoteric meaning. It is held that this can be done because, despite the fact that religions have different theological ideas and different rites, they all teach the same truths and set forth similar processes of salvation. This would enable us to leave to each religion its own developed dogmas, institutions, and ceremonies, while by emphasizing their underlying meaning we should be uniting all mankind without disturbing their prejudices or attempting to proselytize. It is a proposal which evidently understands human nature, and it is not surprising that it is having a profound and ever-widening influence.

(*b*) But there are certain objections that can be urged in general against all these proposals.

They are all highly artificial. Religions do not come into existence in this way. All the great religions, especially those which propagate themselves, come into existence through some great individual experience which is able to be communicated to others. They emerge not when the existing religions are no longer believed in, or through a conscious effort after their purification or improvement, but only when belief is convinced and faith passionate. Thus Buddhism assumes that the Hindu doctrine of reincarnation is true, and its gospel is directed to making a way of escape from the awful chain of repeated personal exist-

ence. If that doctrine of Hinduism be doubted, Buddhism is left almost without a message. Again Christianity founds itself upon the Old Testament, and a fundamental rejection of Judaism would leave Christianity unintelligible.

The proposed agreement upon the inner meaning of religions is confusing and illusory. It is not a fact that all religions teach the same truths under different forms; it is almost more true to say that they all teach different truths under the same forms. The externals of all religions are very much alike, and the same ideas recur, but they signify quite different conceptions. It is vain to imagine that we should be any further forward if we could all unite on a belief in God. Under the idea of God the most diverse notions shelter themselves. It is not belief in God that we need to get clear, but what we believe about God. It is not too much to say that often in the same religion, indeed in Christianity itself, there is a confusion which goes so deep, that what one worships as God another conceives as the devil.

None of these proposals guarantees to give us real religion at all. They tend either to ceremonies or to ideas, not to soul-renewing experiences. They are therefore likely to be unethical in their effect or to become mere philosophies, leaving men in both cases where they were. What is really offered in the esoteric proposal is knowledge of what religions stand for and an occult

explanation of the riddle of existence; whereas what the world really wants is life and power. Philosophy is now beginning to recognize itself as only a transcript of experience, only an abstract of truth, not experience or life itself; and it is inclined to look to religious experience as the only clue to existence.

Then can Christianity put Forward a Better Claim?

1. It can, if rightly understood.

(*a*) There is an exclusive interpretation which must be abandoned.

It cannot be claimed that Christianity is the only true religion, if that means that no other religion holds truth. For Christianity itself draws very deeply from other religions. That the Old Testament should be bound up with the New in our Bible is a fact of extraordinary significance. For in the Old Testament we have not only clear traces of Zoroastrian, Babylonian, and Greek influence, but Hebraism itself rests upon and carries with it a great deal of the primitive religion we find in all heathen systems. In so far as Christianity is a revelation, it carries with it the conclusion that there is some element of revelation in all these systems. What Christianity may claim is that it has taken all the truth in these other religions and has given each its place and proportion.

We cannot confine the meaning of Christianity to the historical Jesus. Without the historicity of Jesus, Christianity certainly has no distinctive message for the world. But Christianity does not make the historic Jesus the sole source of revelation. It is committed to the declaration that Jesus is the Christ. It holds therefore that Jesus is an eternal Spirit who is the life of the world and the light of all men. Therefore He was known before He came in the flesh, and He is known since by those who may know nothing of His earthly life. What Christianity does is to identify the Eternal Spirit by the incarnation. But unless Jesus is that incarnation, His significance, however touching and encouraging, is immeasurably narrowed and reduced.

The salvation that Christianity proclaims does not deny that salvation may be found elsewhere, if by salvation you mean escaping hell or being included in the love of God. By Christian salvation is meant entire spiritual perfection, not for the individual only but for the human race; to be brought about by uniting all men together and building them into the Body of Christ. It might be allowed that there existed alongside the Christian salvation other forms of salvation: and it would probably be true to say that all religions do for you what they promise. Hinduism teaches you how to rise above earthly experience by regarding the whole phenomenal life as delusion; Buddhism

how to slip the burden of personal existence; Mahommedanism how to attain peace by the negation of your own will. All these processes are effective so far as they go. Whether they are desirable ends to aim at is another matter: whether they hold any guarantees for complete personal and social salvation may be doubted.

(*b*) But there is an exclusive interpretation which must be maintained.

What is valuable in Christianity is its distinctive doctrines; not those in which it says what other religions say, but where it says something more. The Trinitarian conception of God, which we have been apologizing for and explaining away, may yet prove to be the only philosophical conception of God that makes it possible to believe that God is living, personal, or love. The doctrine of the Incarnation, in which the fullness of the Godhead is revealed in Christ, is the only adequate answer to what all the other religions have craved and all philosophies have groped after: a historic fact which has elsewhere been expressed only in myths or ideas. If Christianity cannot point to a fact it has nothing to say to the world that has not been already said. All religions teach the forgiveness of sins, but it is the redemption by blood and salvation by the Cross that gets radically down to the human situation. It changes the values of life and exposes the destructive delusions of the world; it breaks

down personality and reconstructs it again around Christ; it pours the Blood of God into the depleted veins of a dying race; it unites men together, and then unites them to God. It is forgiveness by Divine regeneration and is effected by the broken heart of God breaking man's heart. No lesser passion is of any avail.

What needs to be insisted on is the distinctive spirit of Christianity. It needs to be maintained over against Hinduism that the material world is not a delusion, but can be the medium of the Spirit; that is to say, we have to answer Hinduism by Sacramentalism. Over against Buddhism we have to insist on the permanence and value of personality, bringing release from the burden of self by introducing the self into a divinely ordered society in which the difference of personality remains, but union is attained by love; as in the Godhead Itself. That implies the social interpretation of Christianity; not the socialism of absorption, but of union. Over against Mahommedanism, we have to show the pacifism of Christianity. That is out of fashion now, but if it is untrue, what is there that Christianity has to say distinct from Mahommedanism? It is said that Mahommedanism does not really sanction the sword for the propagation of the faith; it only sanctions the sword for its defence. A recent Mahommedan writer tells us that the British Empire cannot be founded on the Bible,

which is dangerously pacific, and recommends Mahommedanism as the real religion which provides the sanctions Britain needs.

Abandon all these distinctions and you do a double wrong. First to Christianity itself. You take away all that has given it power, all that helped it to appeal to the ancient world, which had carried eclecticism in religion to its farthest extent. If you are going to make Christianity one among other religions, you must first take away all that gives it distinction, you must first show that it is false in its claim to be final. But you will also do a great wrong to other religions. It was this they were crying out for: a real Incarnation. If Christianity has answered the craving of other religions, then their craving was inspired; if not, they were just vain and weakening delusions. Christianity is already the reconciliation of other religions. It reconciles even in its idea of the Godhead what was true in both Polytheism and Monotheism, spirituality and idolatry. Therefore it gives them their real meaning and worth, *if it is true.* If Christianity is not true, all religions are false. And it is the evolutionary religion; final because capable of infinite development. It is not a tradition preserved in documents, it is a living growth; it is not an institution, it is a Body.

2. What is needed is a new missionary propaganda.

(*a*) First to Christendom itself.

We must really strive to get professing Christians to understand their own faith. It is the least-understood religion in the world, especially by those who contend for it most earnestly. We need not get the conservative to abandon his creeds, if only he will live them. Theologically imperfect, as they must be, since Christianity is more than thought, they are lucid and absolute when applied to life and society. We could have a perfectly new religion without altering a single doctrine of Christianity, simply by living the doctrines out. We must show the high ecclesiastics that everything they credally profess and ritually express commits them to a revolutionary life.

To non-ecclesiastical Christians we can show that if they want a really liberal religion they had better believe the great Christian dogmas, for every one of them is a protest against some attempt to limit freedom. They maintain that in some instances three can be one. God can be also man, bread can become the body of God, sin and holiness be transferred, and that all things are possible. Socialize your theology, syndicalize your Church, communalize your society, sacramentalize the world order and you will find that Christianity is not a way into prison, but the only way out.

To the religious seekers of our age we can

promise them what they are looking for. To the theosophist we can say that we know the salvation which gives you eternal life, so that you need not come back to this life again; for who wants to? To spiritualists we can promise communion with all the saints and the presence of all the angels, without the danger of getting deceived by devils in the process. To the Christian scientist we can offer the healing of the body through the regeneration of the soul, and all the apostolic marvels back again without having to swallow a demonstrably false philosophy first and abandoning all common sense. We can promise to all freethoughtists and youthful revolutionaries absolute freedom from every kind of bondage, intellectual or ethical, and the sanction and power of the Christian faith to bring about a revolution which will shed neither blood nor tears in the process.

(*b*) To non-Christendom.

We want a better missionary motive and method, one which will start with assuming that God has been preparing all nations for the revelation of Himself in His Son, but we can trust missionary experts to find their own way better than amateurs can tell them.

What is more needed is a propaganda that is free from any suspicion that it has anything to do with spreading the British Empire, or opening up a country for trade. It must be made clear

that we are not introducing our present Western civilization to the backward races, but saving them beforehand from the exploitation and degradation that has come upon a Christ-denying society. Therefore it would be better for missionaries to abandon their British citizenship and to set out to give Christianity a social expression.

For this we want a new army of adventure to seek out the darkest places of the earth. We need not trespass upon fields already explored. We dare to call upon those young men who have been willing to leave home with all their possessions on their back to face death in the battlefield of Europe, to a still more arduous campaign and a still more heroic sacrifice: to leave their rifles behind, to advance without troubling about keeping up connection with the base, to rely only upon Christ, and to go forth to conquer the world for Him by love alone.

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Deep answering Deep

"Deep calleth unto deep."—PSALM xlii. 7.

THE Bible is never afraid of revealing that the heart is in trouble. It knows nothing of that reticence about matters religious which has come to be considered good form. If the soul has a complaint it is voiced, and that without measure; if the heart is hungry there is no pretence that anything can stay its famine short of God. Whereas it is the fashion of the day that all these things should be concealed under an icy reserve. We are more ashamed to mention our spiritual maladies than we are to speak of our physical infirmities. And so religion is damped down, and is compelled to move underground; to break out, as sooner or later it must, in some perverted form or with such violence as to unbalance our whole nature.

Fortunately the Bible was written in a simpler and sincerer age. Much of it was written out in the secret of God's presence, and was never intended for publication; we therefore get confessions without fear or pretence. Here is the guarantee of its immortality: it is a book of the heart, and we turn to it when we are weary of the politeness which must meet the world's enquiry, with a "Quite well, thank you," and take

for our most intimate companion a Book that dares to speak as we feel.

To describe the depth and tumult of his woes this Psalmist finds nothing in nature sufficient, save the sea. The superficial commentators, from which the Book of Psalms suffers most, are doubtful whether the sea can be referred to here. They are more impressed with the discovery of geographical notes on which they can write something than with measuring the depth of the writer's feelings, to which they can add nothing. They infer that the writer was one of a band of captives who were passing into exile and leaving their native land by way of that region of Palestine round about Hermon, where the Jordan takes its rise. And now having got out a map of the land, which they can understand so much better than the mazes of the soul, they are rather perplexed to discover that he mentions the deep with its waves and billows, and feel quite sure that he must be talking not about the sea, but about the upper Jordan; and so leave us with the impoverished image of a river with its cataracts in flood.

And all the while his lines are booming with the sound of the sea. Deep calls to deep, the towering ridges of the waves call to one another as they mount still higher, and the troughs yawn after one another in reply. The frail bark is threatened as the toppling billow roars down like a cataract, and wave after wave rushes over the deck. But when and where, it will be asked did this writer behold the sea. We might as well ask when Shakespeare saw it. The man is a poet, and it

would not even surprise us to learn that he had never known exile, or been near Mount Hermon. It is the exile of the soul from God that he is writing of, and he uses for that the familiar imagery of the beloved land, of which every foot had its spiritual significance, and the unfamiliar imagery of the sea, because that was all the more dreaded.

Indeed, the very picture of terror drawn from the sea is not what a sailor would choose. It is the fear of the uninitiate that the frail craft can never survive the threat of the unexhausted waves. And this provides an image of his sorrows: their sickening recurrence, one surmounted and some fleeting vision of the friendly land descried through the spume and spindrift of the sea, but only another valley to be descended with all sight shut out, unstable cliffs of water hanging in suspense above, and then leaping down in a cataract that must surely overwhelm everything.

But just as a hardened sailor, who knew the power of his ship to outride the storm, might have drawn more comfort from the terrific scene, so the poet's words seem to contain in themselves some suggestion he himself may not have seen. We may think of deep answering deep, in the sense that the discovered deeps in man only suffice to find answering depths in God.

The Consciousness of Human Need Leads to the Discovery of God.

1. The greatest of all arguments for God is man himself.

(*a*) This is so, even on the most naturalistic basis.

The vastness of creation with its infinite variety all grouped together and shot through with the simplest laws; the meeting together in our planet of a thousand conditions, the omission or disproportion of one of which would make it unfit for human habitation, leave upon the mind the impression of Mind and Purpose, which the furthest stretching of the idea of self-sufficing existence cannot so well explain. It is true that the whole Darwinian hypothesis is supposed to get rid of design because it supposes that man is the only creature that could have come into existence in these conditions. They only seem to fit him because they have made him to fit them.

But this seems to ignore the fact that man looks the least likely of all the creatures that these conditions would have evolved. If he is an animal, he is the weakest of animals, unprovided with sufficient means of defence, flight, warmth, or habitation. If we are to assume that man has risen from the animals who have these provisions, then every step of progress that he made was taken with great risk. To say that the gradually discarding of carapace and horn, of crushing bulk and muscular strength, of agility to flee or climb or fly, is the direction that evolution has actually taken does not explain why it should have done so. Such creatures still remain. It must have been a Mind that guided man to prefer mind to might.

But when you come to the actual nature evolved, the argument is still further strengthened. If man has been moulded by his natural environment, why is it that he nowhere finds the environment

satisfy him? Born amid the shadows of time, he falls asleep only to dream of immortality. Knowing nothing beside himself, he is always picturing and measuring himself by a Superior Being. Nothing in the sphere in which he is placed contents him. His mind outsoars the vastness of the universe, neither tired nor contented. He knows another might than that of natural force, one which resides unconquered in his own breast even when the sea engulfs, the volcano overwhelms, or the lightning smites him.

(*b*) And man has thought of God.

To say that the thought of God begins with man; that it is not God who makes man in His own image, so much as man who makes God in his, sounds clever; but it only travels round the circle backwards, leaving the circle still to be explained. How should man, wholly enclosed in an environment which does not contain God, contrive to think of God at all? Aberration, false deduction do not explain it, for what has to be explained is how the mind can outsoar itself, any more than water can rise above its own level.

Man is not contented with himself, or with anything like himself. He is no companion for himself, and none of his species does more than awake in him disappointment, because they all fall short of the perfect thing he seeks. He searches for happiness when no one has ever found it; he sets out to find truth though he could give no reason for believing that truth exists, or would be recognized by him if it did. If we are going to insist that man is explained by his

environment, then we must assume that there is a spiritual environment of which he is faintly conscious, and to which he is beginning to respond. And it is in man's aspirations that we have the clue to what that environment is. A moulding influence, which cannot be traced to stars, or rocks, or air, is at work upon him, and, however faintly, we can discern that man was either made, or is being made, in the image of God.

And this is not all. It is not mere discontent and striving, not only aspiration for better things that he suffers from. He blames himself that he is not better than he is. He is ashamed for his low estate, he has a sense of guilt; as if he had not only failed to rise, but had fallen. Nothing can explain this away. It is written in all our noblest literature, it is the spring of all our indignations, it is the verdict of every heart that knows itself. The sense of sin is not the invention of theologians, or the cause of religions; religions come into being in order to take the sense of sin away, and all the theologies that ever were, however poor they be, are efforts of the head to explain the strange sadness at the heart. God is not, therefore, a mere forward pitch of the mind, marking out the height man has set himself to reach; God is a vision that has caused man infinite pain. Here is the proof that it is real. It is not a thought conducive to comfort; it is a revelation that leaves man smitten, stabbed, broken, contrite.

2. It is the facing of these deeps in us that reveals the answering deeps in God.

(*a*) It is man's need that demands the Incarnation.

To read some theologians and to listen to some objections to Christianity, one would think that the Incarnation was simply a device on the part of God to force upon man a most unnecessary and unwelcome test in order to catch him out. So astonishing is the modern misapprehension, that the Incarnation appears to us not so much a means of salvation as almost a means of depriving the majority of human beings of it. It is found impossible to believe just because salvation is made to depend upon being able to believe.

But what is overlooked in all this is the great cry for the Incarnation that is found in all religions: confused and inarticulate in some, clear and definite in the Hebrew religion, but really expressed in some form everywhere. Hindu myths, heathen idols, Greek sculpture, the tendencies of religions like Buddhism and Mohammedanism which start out either with denying God or His Incarnation and yet end up with something very like both; these in their degree cry out for a manifestation of God within the limits of human life. And to come to modern speculation, Mr. H. G. Wells crusading against Christianity in every shape and form, yet comes down to just this: the demand for a personal, finite God who shares our strifes, is born and dies, and dwells with us as our friend. The Incarnation is the answer to the human cry that God would show His face.

The trouble is that all do not feel this. Some could be content with a prophetic message, or with an inner conviction, or with a general incarnation in the universe or humanity. But there are other souls who have been through the darkest

shadow of doubt, who have profoundly sceptical minds, above all, who have certain rebellious tendencies in them; and they cannot rest content with any reports at second hand, not even through the holiest of men and the most convincing of seers; they are horribly afraid that the thought of God is simply of the mind's own devising: and in a merely immanent God they find no features, discover no character, feel they cannot worship one who has known nothing of life and its experience of weak infancy, youthful temptation, manhood's struggles. They prefer a poor fallen man to any Olympian Deity, and one hour of strife with our flesh and blood to æons of merely spiritual sympathy. It is not only God for their Father which they want, but God for their brother. They are not surprised therefore that Christ was born poor and enslaved, that He grew up unlettered and obscure, and that He was rejected by the wise and prudent, and that, from this world's point of view, He completely failed: because it was just this man has had to be, and, oh, ten thousand hallelujahs! just this that God became.

(*b*) It is the deeps of sin in man that demand the deeps of the atonement.

There are those who would have been satisfied if Jesus had come to earth and had ascended without dying. They love the cradle, but they do not understand the cross, for they do not want it. If there is any forgiving to be done, they would be quite content with a general proclamation of the Father's determination to overlook and forget. They are impatient with the whole

theological literature of Atonement, not so much because it fails to convince, but because they do not see any necessity for it. They are content to know that the light will still go on shining if they miss it for a moment or in a foolish hour turn their backs upon it. If only God remains unchanging when they perchance should change, that suffices. There is no need to say that they are shallow people. It may simply be that they are good people, natural saints.

But there are others in the world. There are those who find it hard to believe that God can forgive, because they find it very hard to forgive themselves. Their sin has wrecked their life, it has poisoned their mind, in has entered into their blood; nay, worse, it has poisoned others too, it has caused others to suffer. Before they can believe that God can forgive, they must feel sure that God knows what sin feels like; yes, that He knows what it feels like to be the injured person; for it is only the injured person that really has the right to forgive. Therefore, they need that God shall enter this life, and not only feel sad for the sins of men, be their conscience and their penitence, but actually endure in Himself the very worst that sin can devise: betrayal, cruelty, the outrage of justice, the wounding of love. They are not astonished at Calvary.

But there must be even more. It is not sufficient that all this wrong and evil should be borne by God uncomplainingly, that He should receive the blows and the betraying kiss without concern, that He should breast the waves of human sin with faith and courage; because some whom

sin has cursed have not been able to do that. He must feel it all, not as some proud and self-sufficient noble who perishes at the hands of the mob, not as some martyr gladly dying for the cause he believes in, but as some defenceless woman, smitten where she trusted, unable to console herself for love turned to hate, sinking under the blow with faith wrecked and darkened, and heart broken. He who knows what sin is and what sin can do, can only receive forgiveness at the hand of one who shrank from the cup, whose heart was pierced and whose mind gave way, driven by sin to despair and darkness, tasting all the hell that man can drive others into. If God has not felt this, and not by mere sympathy, He cannot forgive in any way that brings relief to man. There is no solace for man's broken and contrite heart save the broken yet forgiving heart of God.

The Depths of our Despair will disclose the Depths of God's Answer.

1. That is why a serious view of the present world-situation is the most hopeful.

(*a*) No one can take a light view now.

People who imagine that the terrible calamity of the present war can be traced to some simple source, such as the downfall of one nation or the machinations of one particular person or clique are doing the gravest disservice to humanity, because they go on to propose a surgical operation when it is a case of poisoned blood. If we could indeed destroy our enemies, that would give no

guarantee that Europe would never suffer again from a calamity like the present. If our enemies are solely to blame, there is no security that some other nation may not soon go the same way, nay, no safeguard against ourselves becoming like them. The dangers of our falling into the temptation of a commercial imperialism, of becoming proud and boastful, trusting solely in our money and might, may be discovered in any half-dozen speeches of our public men that you care to take at random. We seem blind to the forces that are everywhere rising into power and corrupting whole masses of our people by false ideals.

If people would only look deeper they would see that we are faced with the suicide of civilisation, not only in the deadlock into which the very idealism of the war is forcing all the belligerents, not only because famine may yet step in to lay equal terms upon us all, but because civilisation is built upon a wrong basis. The idealisms which were the characteristic mark of the nineteenth century were erected upon a foundation which was unable to support them, and they have consequently evaporated into mere sentimentalisms. If the Christian view of life is the true one the world is organised upon wrong lines. And what we are seeing now is that even the old ideals, inadequate as they may have been, are themselves in danger of being simply denied.

One of the chief reasons of this is the great defection from definite Christianity, which is traceable to three causes: First, the almost entire misapprehension among large sections of the more

thoughtful people of what Christianity is; with the result that it is regarded as obsolete or unrelated to the needs of our times. Second, to a high devotional Christianity, evangelical or sacramental, which can persist alongside a great unconcern for the conditions of social life and a lack of conscience about the economic basis of their own lives; producing the suspicion of downright hypocrisy and insincerity. Third, to a drawing off of the socially awakened and morally conscientious into hostility to the Church or into despair of Christianity.

(*b*) The view is even more serious when we turn to the task of reconstruction.

Those who know that things are deeply wrong with the social ordering of the world, and have some idea of how things are to be put right, are bound to get depressed as they realise how ingrained the system is, how difficult it is to escape from it, and what enormous resources of mind and spirit are needed if we are to summon the forces that are necessary to effect a change. War is a symptom rather than a cause, and no one who has given the actual facts even trifling thought can imagine that it is going to be removed out of this present system by a mere turning over of the surface of things. Those people who maintain that war is necessary unless you can change human nature have hold of a vital truth which the optimist will neglect at his peril.

We have to put aside also the superficial judgment that the social order can be changed apart from considerable sacrifices being made by all classes of the community. It is not only that

the privileged few take toll of life's wealth, which reduces thousands to a miserable existence, but there will have to be very much more work and sacrifice by all, if the standard of even a decent subsistence for all is to be secured. No great social change can come with a little more hand-shaking or a slight readjustment here and there; there will have to be sacrifices from every class; for some their money and power, and for others, their disloyalty and hindering ways.

We want for this a new set of life values accepted by the great majority of people; and this can only come as the result of a religious revival which shall lead to the clear and conscious adoption of Christianity by the mass of the people. What is wanted to-day is the conversion of the world, nothing less, and if we have not got so far as seeing that, we know nothing and are in a pitiable plight. By conversion we mean neither a formal acceptance of Christian doctrines, nor a mere adhesion to general Christian principles; but we mean a grasp of Christianity both in its eternal sanctions and its ethical applications; in short, not our grasp of Christianity so much as Christ's complete grasp of us. It is in a sense a counsel of despair, for there is little that man can do to bring this about. It demands the outpouring of the Holy Ghost, the coming of the Kingdom of God, the manifestation of the Son of man.

2. But there are deeps in God which answer to these deeps in us.

(*a*) If we would only be bold enough to confess to their existence.

There is a positive inhibition of any great and decided turning to God at the present time, because of the prevailing opinion that God can only rescue the world by one way, namely, by the submission of our enemies. I do not plead for the adoption of my views on this matter, and it would make no difference if I did, but I do plead for a more open mind as to the possibilities resident in the Divine nature. Let us get away from the discussion for a moment, whether God can or does use military force to further His purposes. Let us be willing to admit that He does use *other* methods, and certainly did in setting forth His salvation in Christ; and let us at least inquire whether in face of the tremendous probability that our methods are going to fail, set ourselves to inquire what God is saying to the world in this hour and what way He is calling us to take.

We are almost afraid to pray, with any freedom, openness, and volume, lest our enemies should overhear, and think that we are weakening. In all the recommendations for prayer that come to us from official or royal quarters it is assumed that there is only one thing worth praying for, namely, military victory. There is not even a suggestion that it would be of any value for us to pray that our enemies might repent and be reconciled. We are more afraid that our enemies would hear our prayers than we are sure that God would hear them. Why cannot the nation be called to a prayer that shall be universal in its outlook, prayer for a deliverance that shall be clearly traceable to God alone? What

the world needs for future security is a clear vindication of the power of God.

If I know anything of God's ways in dealing with the soul, I know that it is not until He has got the soul to abandon its own efforts and throw itself upon His mercy alone, that the great moment comes, and the great change is made. I cannot believe that what is true for the individual soul is untrue for mankind as a whole. If only we would be brave enough to confess our real need, to admit the darkness of the world situation, instead of trying to keep our spirits up by a perpetual handshaking! Give me the bravery of a nation on its knees, and I shall know that the hour of God's answer is not far away.

(*b*) For there are resources in God that have not yet been appropriated. Our religion which teaches us what God has done for the salvation of the world in sending Christ to us does not mean us to think that that was the end, the last thing that God could do. It was the beginning of a new era of revelation. It teaches us to look for the further and more glorious coming of Christ. This promise, so long delayed, so often misinterpreted, may strike some of us as rather hopeless to rely upon. But I believe that the coming of the Son of man in glory means a further manifestation of God, such as will bring to fulfilment all that Christ means for the race. I am not prepared to say whether it includes some physical and personal manifestation or not. I am not prepared to shut out anything. I am only certain that it means something adequate to our need, the declaration to the whole world that Christ is King.

Or, if our hopes are of a more spiritual kind, we believe that there is to be an outpouring of the Spirit of God upon all flesh, which has never yet been given us save in the earnest of Pentecost. There have been all down history great movements of religion that have lifted masses of people nearer to God, and these have often come in response to those who, driven to despair, set themselves to call upon God for the sending of His Spirit. If we could only set expectation thrilling for a world-wide movement, not only for political freedom and deliverance from the war, but for a new assurance of God, we could expect the effects of Pentecost to be more than repeated: a new fraternization, the misunderstandings of language and race broken down, and a new order of social sharing set up voluntarily and with joy.

We can be confident that there is in God capacity to meet the enormous depths of need that have now been disclosed, if we are willing to feel and confess that the need is there. God has allowed the world to come to this hour that it might be driven to find in Him what it has sought elsewhere in vain. Think for a moment of the Hand that framed the worlds, that guided men against all natural forces up to reason and light; think above all of the Hand that for our sakes was consented to be nailed to the tree, and with that in mind dare to believe that there is no deep disclosed in man that God cannot more than answer.

The Cost of Following Christ

"If any man would come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me."

MARK viii. 34.

THE saying about taking up the cross, occurring as it does five times in our Gospels, presents a pretty problem for the critic. There is the question as to whether all the various recensions go back to a single utterance, and if so, which is the original form: to whom it was spoken, to the disciples, or the crowd, or to both; and especially whether it was spoken before or after Jesus made the open prediction of His own death by the cross. All these are interesting questions, and in following them out one may find the saying lit up into clearness, and able to be more deeply understood. But right and profitable as these inquiries are, there are times when the light and understanding comes more swiftly from life itself. There is no commentary upon the Gospel like life lived for the same ends; and once again the age is providing us with something even better than an *apparatus criticus*. Words that have had to be taken metaphorically are suddenly literalized for us, and we are back again in the *milieu* of the Gospels, where the saying was in no danger of being evaporated into something soft and airy. It may have been a metaphor when first it was uttered, but it was a metaphor which was in no danger of being misunderstood.

In all the agony and perplexity of our days we have the honour of living in what may be designated Gospel times. The Christian issues, which seemed to have been translated into the merely intellectual, come to us now as living issues; the metaphors of the Gospel are no longer able to be evaded by arguments for or against literalism; everywhere they bristle with actuality. What we imagined to constitute the great difference between those times and our own, namely, the political complications and the ethical obscurations of our age, is seen to be no difference at all. The astonishing simplicity which the Gospel presents is not due to the simpler conditions or clearer issues. The situation was as politically complicated as our own, and the purely ethical dilemma as distracting. It is solely owing to the purity of Christ's motives and His clear moral strategy that the situation looks so simple. He always penetrated to the fundamental issue, and confronted life everywhere so closely that He could always bring the forces for and against into clear opposition.

Let us see whether this important saying enables us to clear the way before our own feet.

It Demands First an Inner Renunciation.

"Let him deny himself."

1. We are familiar with partial approximations to this process.

(*a*) In the practice of what has come to be called *self-denial.*

Self-denial has come to indicate the practice of small abstinences or the pursuit of a mild asceticism. This is sometimes adopted in order

to serve some altruistic purpose, such as when we keep a self-denial week, and devote the money that we usually spend upon sweets or tobacco to Foreign Missions or to the Salvation Army. Or during other periods such as Lent, or on certain days, we may deny ourselves small luxuries on the principle that it is good for the soul to meet some demands of the flesh, not in themselves wrong, with refusal.

We are accustomed to use the expression to denote a persistent manner of life in which of one's own choice one relinquishes comfortable surroundings and goes to live among the poor, or on principle adopts a lower standard of living than one can afford, or leaves home and civilization in order to preach the Gospel in distant and barbarous lands. Or, there are the commoner cases of those who deny themselves freedom, ease, or proper rest and recreation in order to minister in the home or to fulfil their duty to some relative; the self-denying life which women, especially, so often follow, that it comes to be regarded as their natural lot.

These things are in different degree valuable. Although the ordinary ecclesiastical suggestions for self-denial are trivial enough, yet so great a psychologist as William James approved of the idea, and himself suggested that we should do every day some little thing we did not like doing, just in order to guard against the tyranny of our likes and dislikes, and set here and there outposts against the advance of selfishness. In the case of a *life* of denial, where it is undertaken in sympathy, love, or duty, our admiration is immediate, and our approval unqualified. Yet it is obvious

that our Lord called us to something more vigorous than petty ascetisms, and more inward than even life-long and severe self-denial need always be.

(*b*) Another line attempted is the *denial of the self.*

This may found itself upon the philosophy that the existence of the self as such is a mistaken development, or a fall from undifferentiated being. We ought not to be persons or individuals at all. Self-hood is a sin and a perversion. We have separated ourselves from the divine ground of our being, and attempted to become self-constituted centres. A good deal of this is expressed in terms so ambiguous and with so little examination of the ultimate issues that one cannot be sure what is meant. In historic Buddhism, in some forms of mysticism, and in a good deal of theosophy, the idea is open to quite different interpretations, one of which may be harmless and the other suicidal.

There is a great attraction in the idea of getting rid of self-consciousness. Many of us are haunted by a continual self-consciousness that prevents us ever finding the great refreshment of forgetting all about ourselves in some absorbing task, or even in our religious devotion. We are always watching ourselves; we live as if we were always about to be photographed; when we try to get alone with nature or with God, we cannot help behaving just as if we were in the presence of a crowd. This either leads to a continual introspection till we become like a spider caught in its own web; or it makes it impossible for us ever to do the finest work, in social service, in art or religion. We are kept back from making

the great adventure and everything is spoiled by a self-consciousness which any one can recognize and point out as a defect. We feel if we could be free from this we should be free indeed; our work would have those marks of greatness and do that service which comes from being able to be absorbed and abandoned in doing one thing.

Both these processes fail to reach real self-denial because they deal with the mere superficial psychology of the matter. They imagine that self-dedication can only be obtained by self-extinction, and they confuse simplicity of consciousness with unity of purpose. In the extinction of the self nothing is redeemed. Even absorption of the self in God, which some think to be quite Christian, can only mean that God becomes nothing to us and we become nothing to God. In seeking for release from self-consciousness we are striving for what is only an effect, without having gained a true cause. Mere simplicity of nature is not to be desired; the great thing is simplification, and that is the greater achievement and has the greater effect where there has been much to simplify.

2. Can we then penetrate further into the secret of this demand?

(*a*) It is a moral act rather than a psychological process.

There is such a thing as a determinate and registered will to renounce concern for self as the motive of life. It ought to be adopted on the discovery that although we are each meant to be a self, to live for self is an inversion of our nature, and is therefore the radical sin from which all others spring. It is not only sin, it is silly;

for it condemns us to an unending, never-satisfying, and miserable task. It is a fruitless and futile attempt to bend a nature in upon itself which was expressly designed to flow outwards. The discovery of this must lead to the determination that it must be put right. If we live for ourselves, we shall lose both life and ourselves. This conviction is the one transforming change of mind that we all need; for however it is to be explained, while we are clearly created for this unselfish life, we all tend to become selfish.

The discovery and the determination may be insufficient in themselves to uncoil the spring which has been reversed, and the perfectly unselfish life may demand a life-process to attain; for it is only as we live and learn that we can discover the depths and area of the self-regarding tendency. But the original purpose is one that can be renewed in every new discovery of its application, and it is one that once taken may act and go on acting all through life. The act of the will looks so small a thing that we are tempted to despair of it accomplishing anything, or even overlook the necessity for a considered determination and resolve; but it is a real source of inward power which once released goes on, and grows by exercise; and without this initial will to be different nothing can be done. It is on this will and on the continued willing that there comes in time the unification and straightening of the whole nature which brings real rest, and generates the highest efficiency.

Stay then for a moment; consider; and resolve. You are presented with the choice of attempting to live for your self; to make the

whole of your life revolve round self-pleasing; to judge everything by what you yourself are going to get out of it; yourself the sole and sufficient standard, guide, and goal. And you may for the time, if your self is planned on great lines, attain a great appearance of success; by these steps you may, if consistent enough, climb rapidly to fortune, fame, and power; though it is much more likely that you will just be eaten up with disappointment, bitterness, and irritation; but whether you reach the top or not, the end is always the same: a narrowing existence, an increasing disillusionment, and at last weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth; the perverted demand always growing greater, the possible satisfaction always growing less. As the plagues of lust and drink and drugs to the flesh, so is the self-life to the soul. The other way means with its first step the end to half the slavery, sorrow, worry, and fear that chain the soul. It does not matter who you are or where you stand, you step out into freedom, along an ever-opening path, with the secret of mastery over all things already in your possession.

(*b*) It is the great distinction of Christ to have provided the one sufficient motive.

It is interesting to notice that the following of Christ starts with the initial demand of all ethical and religious and psychological systems whatever: the abandonment of self. All of them which are really serious make this initial demand; every one who has ever thought at all, knows that this decision comes up first and imperiously; and Christianity makes this also the first step. The great difference is that Christ proposes Him.

self as the beginning and end of the process. He speaks to those who have felt the desire to follow Him, and tells them that this is now the first thing necessary; necessary if as a final result they are to follow Him at all. The distinction between "come after Me" and "follow Me" is probably the difference between literal following, joining Christ's company, and the inner following, the spiritual obedience, which is the great thing.

Not much experiment in the endeavour to free ourselves from the slavery of self-concern is necessary before we discover that it needs an incentive which we ourselves cannot provide. No device, not the subtlest psychology can suggest, really guarantees that the effort to ungear the self from its false centring will succeed. They all have to meet the question why you desire to do it, and how you propose to start about it. If you desire it for the sake of the self, you almost inevitably involve yourself in winding the spring of life about itself again the closer; and you never can be sure that this motive is not present, corrupting you all along. Even if you are free from any such motive, the process concentrates attention upon the self, and even without intent, and when watched carefully, again incurs the same danger. While, on the other hand, nothing outside the self that is not itself a self can provide anything better: nature, nor humanity as such, nor even God, if He is to absorb us, for then He is generally conceived as Himself without a self.

We must have another self, itself free from self-concern; for two selfish people can often play into one another's selfish tendencies. It must be another self, capable of attracting all the love

for all of life there is upon itself, and yet, through itself, of providing a new outlet into all selves there are. Christ alone has ever dared to offer Himself for this task; Christ alone has ever been proclaimed as sufficient for this task. It is not a question of testing Him among other competitors; there are none. If He will not do, there is no one else, and it is hard to conceive how there ever can be. It is the love for His life, and for the self that manifests, which not only meets those who have already ransacked all the ethical theories, and thought through all the philosophies and tried all the psychological devices from Buddhism to the latest American practice before a looking-glass; but puts those right who do not even know what is the matter with them, and have never tried anything at all. He meets men either at the beginning or end of the process, and wins one testimony from them both.

It Demands an Outward Manifestation.

"Take up his cross."

1. What did that mean for Christ's immediate followers?

(*a*) It was a perfectly understood and quite possible danger.

Picture for a moment some condemned criminal on the way to execution bearing, as was the custom, the cross beam of the gallows on his shoulders. Ask, first of all, why he was thus condemned? It seems likely that in the Gospel times this method was used for putting to death those who were convicted of attempted rebellion against the Roman Government. The country

was continually disturbed by revolutionaries who were plotting to overthrow the Romans, who gathered themselves into bands, and who frequently committed acts against order or property in order to force the issue. There can be little doubt that the two persons crucified with Christ were robbers in this sense; and Barabbas is the exact type.

Yet it was not that they should imitate their methods of violence. Christ was perfectly clear, and He went to His death partly because He was perfectly clear, that He entirely disapproved of methods of violence as a means of bringing in the kingdom. The Sermon on the Mount sets forth a programme over against the Zealot programme of violent insurrection. Yet at the same time one cannot help noticing that Jesus had a most tremendous admiration for the Zealot. He included a convert from their ranks among his own disciples, Simon Zelotes, and in the reference to taking the kingdom of heaven by force we can hardly be sure whether He approves or not; so much does He allow of good intent.

What Jesus admired was the energy of the Zealot. He loved that. He really loved the man who would do things, even mistaken things, in his effort to bring some change. His immediate disciples were men of this kind; Peter, who was always ready to leap over a precipice or into the sea, if he thought it was the thing to do; and James and John, whom Jesus named playfully "the sons of thunder," so full of lightning and violence were they. In this they misunderstood Him again and again, but He did not misunderstand them. We cannot help wondering what

would have happened if Jesus had decided to put Himself at the head of a popular revolt. What can they be thinking of, who say that Jesus only refrained from this because He knew that it could not succeed? The country only needed a leader. Galilee took three years for Rome's finest legions to subdue, when at last the challenge was taken up. Jerusalem resisted heroically, and the final siege of Bether is a story of great gallantry, the garrison holding out until they were killed to a man. The later revolt of Bar Cochba was serious enough to determine the complete destruction of the Jewish people as the only way of preventing further danger. What a leader Jesus would have made! He might not only have swept the Romans out of the land, but have conquered the Empire. At any rate, we can be certain that the risks of failure would not have caused Him to hesitate.

(*b*) The inner meaning, therefore, was willingness to pay the price.

That price was more than death, and that a cruel death of torture; though that was something that any sane person would do all he could to avoid. The price meant the shame of failure. That shame was a very deep and heart-breaking thing. The world has an admiration for revolutionaries, if only they succeed; it has nothing to say for those who fail. But over and above the inner shame of failure, there was the still more crushing public shame, which conviction and sentence to a criminal's death involved. It did not matter who the revolutionary was, what he had sacrificed to make common cause with bands of desperate and discountenanced men; once he

was in the hands of the authorities he would find he had no friends, even among those who would have claimed him hero if he had succeeded; no one to cast upon him so much as a compassionate glance as he went to a felon's death.

Now, it was willingness for such an end that Jesus made the test; the cruel death, the risk of failure, the open rejection and shame; and it was just because of this that Jesus chose His illustration from this all too common sight of criminals bearing their cross to their ignominious end. Some kinds of death will always seem so crowned with glory that men will risk it: the death that all acknowledge to be great, the soldier's death that even your enemies will honour. It is the death that is accompanied with the shame of failure, the death that involves public degradation: few will risk that. Therefore Jesus made it the test. It involves going alone, doing the unpopular thing; and involves dying alone, with no glimmer of glory round about the last hour.

It is remarkable that Jesus should have proposed such a test, because He carefully taught His followers that they must avoid every just charge of deserving such an end. They must not touch the methods of forceful revolution, not even if they were likely to succeed. They must do nothing to deserve the criminal's penalty; and yet it is the criminal's penalty that they must be prepared to pay. They must not touch insurrection, and yet it must be the charge of being unsuccessful insurrectionaries that they must be willing to risk. This test brings out the element of shame which is so hard to bear; but it was literally such a test that He Himself had

at last to endure. At last He had to walk alone beneath that staggering load, not only of the beam of the cross, but the repudiation of all respectable people, the scorn of those who would have owned Him if He had succeeded, but disowned Him only because He had failed. And for His followers, for three hundred years, it was just that price they had to be willing to pay; the unjust charge of disloyalty, sedition, being enemies of the human race and deniers of their social duties. Jesus not only seized upon the most penetrating moral test, but upon the test that actually was applied; in His own case to the letter, and in that of His followers, in essence the same.

2. What does this mean for Christ's followers to-day?

(*a*) The same test remains.

What any man has to face in following Christ is the possible loss of respect, the possible shame of failure, the final test of being willing to die. There may be long comfortable ages when the test is never applied; but if it has not been faced and accepted, one's discipleship has given no proof of loyalty. One must always be prepared for this. And if there is never any conceivable chance of the test being put into operation, one has the duty of asking whether one is living the life at all. For there has never been a time when following Christ did not demand breaking out in an adventurous search for a new way of life. Never since Christ died has the life that men have been willing to live together been one in which the Christian disciple could acquiesce; never has society been so rightly based that one who sought for the Christian basis would not

have to risk tragic and stupid failure or the violent opposition of those who have determined to keep things as they are. This does not mean that those who have made all the experiments, or all those who have died the revolutionary's death, have been following in the way of Christ; but it has meant that all who have been willing to follow must have been willing for that kind of disgraceful death in the end. And it is at least food for grave reflection that it is almost entirely people outside the Christian faith who have been willing to incur this sort of odium and risk for centuries now.

In this great judgment which has fallen upon us, many a man has believed that it was his duty to risk his life in defence of his country and in the effort to protect the weak and the oppressed, and has seen in the call to arms the way of the cross for him. In so far as they have felt that, one feels sure that they will have earned the Master's recognition, even if they have too hastily assumed His sanction. Christ's way was not the soldier's or the Zealot's; but He liked both Zealots and soldiers, as any one can see. He will honour the soldier, and still more the violent revolutionary, who may offend against His teaching and programme, but who may embody much of His spirit. No higher seal can be put upon the soldier's sacrifice, and we can agree with those who claim it, if they are willing at the same time to claim as much for the violent insurrectionist who believes that only force can bring about political or economic freedom.

This puts upon those who want to follow Christ still more closely a very severe test. If they will

not take the way of the sword, if they reject the way of armed rebellion, they must give evidence that they are willing for the way of failure and shame. There seems no honourable alternative to-day between the trenches and prison. Indeed, the pacifist ought to put to himself the question why his protest did not go so far in times of peace that even then all his actions incurred the odium, fear, penalty, and shame which now come upon him mixed with some degree of charges on other grounds. And when the forceful revolution comes, as it is only too likely it will, the only man who will have the real right to stand aside will be he who has risked everything beforehand to show how society can be established rightly without force at all.

(*b*) We shall all feel, in the light of this test, that we have forfeited the name of disciples.

The soldier, the conscientious objector, the social pacificator will hardly spend much time in reproaching one another when they really face this demand of Christ. I cannot imagine how any one will not feel convicted of central disloyalty, cowardice, and compromise. Christ has asked too much of us. His demand has revealed our unworthiness, our radical weakness: the unsurrendered heart that has at last brought treachery to His cause.

Never again shall we be able to talk of discipleship in the glib and superficial way that we have, as some sort of easier alternative to intellectual conviction. The denial of self means something far more than the trivialities of High Church asceticism, or the mazes of psychic experiments, or concentration. The bearing of the cross

demands something much more serious than the patient endurance of minor irritations, the disappointment of our ambitions, the sufferings of life which all men have to bear. Nor can one slip out of the challenge by saying that one has never claimed to be a disciple or a Christian, but only one who believes that Christ was right; for Christ clearly recognizes nothing as faith which is not prepared to venture thus far. And if one goes farther and says that one has never professed to believe in Christ, it is still open to inquire whether this does not mean in essence that the real alternative is belief only in oneself, mere selfish concern.

If we feel this at all, where can one begin to get right? It is no use rushing into action, courting a heroic end, playing for martyrdom. That might save one's own soul, but in a sense that the New Testament would probably call losing it. One has to go back to an inner secret. Before the cross can be really faced, one must face the inner issues of denying self. The cross that is dared apart from that will do nothing to save the world: you cannot overleap any step in this process. And this straightening out of the self-life means a secret interview with Jesus Christ, which, if we are in earnest, must begin by absolute abandonment to Him in full consciousness of all that it entails. None but He can effect that; none but He can know if the test has really been faced. But everything depends upon coming close to the issue He presents. To shirk it means to shirk life; to evade it means to sell oneself into slavery; to confuse it means to lose one's soul.

The Church Rebuilt by Love

"Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of John, lovest thou me?"—JOHN xxi. 15.

IT is widely agreed that the closing chapter of the Fourth Gospel is an afterthought, either added by another hand, or written later by the Evangelist. Its purpose seems to be to show how St. Peter was restored to his position as leader of the Apostles; and since that seems a merely ecclesiastical purpose, advanced critics are inclined to suspect the whole incident, and to regard the story as made up from the miraculous draught of fishes recorded to have take place earlier in the ministry.

It is difficult to believe that such a motive or such a method could have produced a story of such matchless and tender beauty. Provide, if you like, an incomparable poet and dramatist, but even he would have been incapable of producing from his imagination such a perfect combination of supernatural awe and homely familiarity; and what psychological insight could have con-

structed that dialogue between Peter and his Lord, so probing, and yet so healing ?

I prefer to think that this story derives its power from the presence of Jesus Christ risen from the dead. Who otherwise would have dared to imagine that the glorified Lord would have occupied Himself in preparing breakfast for these cold and disappointed fishermen ? None but He could have created that strange atmosphere in which Peter was at one moment his old headstrong self and at another pierced with penitential grief.

But this conclusion need not contradict the ecclesiastical motive that critics have detected. The ecclesiastical motive is at work all through this strange Gospel, contending for the ultimate truth about Christ, combating heresies, correcting false tendencies ; but it works in the true ecclesiastical way, that is in the spirit of Christ's *ecclesia*, the assembly of His freed men. It does show how St. Peter was rehabilitated ; but how wonderfully and how rightly ! He had been named the Rock, because of his confession that Jesus was the Christ. But he had proved anything but a rock ; he had fallen more shamefully than the rest. This questioning is meant to remind him of his proud boasts that though all others denied Him, he would remain faithful ; the thrice-repeated question is meant to recall the thrice-repeated denial ; and the subtle interchange of the words used for " love,"

which no translation can reproduce, extracts the confession that though Peter could not claim to love with his will, he did love with his heart; and this is taken as sufficient to reinstate him and renew his commission to tend the flock of God. It is all very beautiful and touching; but it also sets forth a principle of profound application.

Love to Jesus must Rebuild the Church.

1. We are all very anxious about the Church in these days.

(*a*) Many doubt whether it can survive the present crisis.

The Church seems to have forfeited all right to leadership. During the war it has been content to accept the ordinary political estimate as the only one upon which we can act, to have sunk to the level of journalistic judgment, and to have simply reiterated the opinion of the man in the street. There are those who still stoutly maintain that in this the Church was right, because the common judgment was right; but it looks as if the Church were really afraid of governments, and still more afraid of the mob. At any rate, it seems to possess no guiding principle, or throw a more penetrating light upon the meaning of events; for there emerges from the Church only the most confused and inconclusive utterance. And this is no new discovery. If the Church

could not speak about war in general or this war in particular, neither could it before the war say anything with unity and force about the social conditions out of which war almost certainly grows. Even where it did seem to have a glimmer of light, there seemed to be little power to persuade the world to follow the light itself or to point to any practical way out of a situation that was involving the denial and threatening the destruction of Christianity.

All this has left many wondering whether organized Christianity is not a mistake. The attempt to organize so subtle a thing as the spiritual life seems only to lead to its repression, and to the substitution of an organization, mechanical, cramping and cumbrous, in the place of a living organism. The Church seems to be always concerned only with external questions about order and form, and quarrels about episcopal succession, vestments, incense, and other trifles; seems only able to be stirred about problems which to minds outside the Church are dead and don't matter. Every form of ecclesiasticism, sooner or later, gets tied up with traditions, becomes interested in its own organization more than in what it was intended to do, gets concerned over property and prestige.

And yet a Church of some kind seems necessary and inevitable. Persons of similar conviction are bound to get together, and persons who have passed through the great inner experiences which

Christ induces are drawn to one another by an irresistible impulse. And when they get together they find that they possess more in union than they do apart, and out of this comes the sense of solidarity and commission and the need for organization. Destroy the Church as it is to-day, and it is certain that another would soon take its place. And this human instinct is given a Divine sanction in the New Testament, which not only speaks of the Church possessing powers that no individual could attain or dare handle, facts which social psychology would only confirm; but invests the Church with such wonderful ideals that it dares to speak of it as the very Bride and Body of Christ.

(*b*) Therefore the more thoughtful propose the reconstruction of the Church. The lines on which this is proposed are frequently quite negative. Get rid of certain things that have been accumulated or developed, and all will be well; get rid of theology, or ritual, or priesthood, or sacraments; or abandon State establishment, redress the gross inequalities of ministerial salary, give up a paid ministry altogether, or renounce property. Much could be said about the necessity of any or all of these; but the point is that the external change is thought to be sufficient.

Others look rather to a reconstruction of the Church by using the present elements, but in a different combination. They look for the reunion

of the Church as the great need, and widely different proposals are made for the basis on which this should be attempted: "be good and do good"; "the worship of God and the service of man"; "simple belief in Christ." Others look to solving the historical problems by seeking for the reunion of all the Catholic Churches, or of all the Protestant Churches, or of all the Free Churches. Some look for the creation of a Free Catholicism and others to the actual bridging of the gulf between Protestant and Catholic by a World Congress on Faith and Order.

Others again believe that the Church has come to its present position because it has mistaken its purpose; its power has been lost through being short-circuited. The Church has become practically an association for the support of Public Worship, and a merely inspirational movement. It has turned over to the secular power the whole problem of social order and international relationship; whereas it was meant to be itself a self-supporting society, with its own economic basis and type of government, and itself the bond between the nations that should maintain peace and reconcile enemies. Let the Church attempt to be what it was meant to be, and it would find itself in touch with that "reality" which every one is clamouring for, and no one is able to find; it would possess an all-sufficient test of sincerity in the willingness to renounce

private possessions and to face the suffering involved in attempting the rôle of the Peacemaker.

Much could be said about all these proposals, but just at present we want to point to something of prior importance.

2. The Church can only be restored by a revived love for Jesus.

(*a*) That is indisputably the source and centre of the Church's life.

Leave this out and everything goes wrong. You may have the most orthodox theology and the most perfect expression in rites and ceremonies; but the theology becomes hard and hateful, the rites empty and the ceremonies cold. You may still have that Church patriotism which we call ecclesiasticism, and which ought to be as noble as any patriotism can be; but without this love for Jesus it becomes intolerant, scheming, unscrupulous, and, like other forms of patriotism not unknown to-day, is motived more by hatred for enemies than love for friends; in the end becoming the worst traitor and enemy of that which it is concerned to protect and further. And neither does the mere abandonment of any or all these things, without love, produce anything better; even where it gains social enthusiasm, often only wasting itself in ineffectual screaming, political strategy, and doing nothing save further intensifying hostility and bitterness.

But it is the love of Jesus that is the heart of religion we want to recover. It is to the love of Jesus that we look for conversion, "the expulsive power of a new affection," as the only means of changing character and breaking the chains of evil habit. It is to the love of Jesus that we look for loyalty and perseverance; if a soul gets this far it is anchored, and if it does not, we are never sure that it will not wander off and get lost. It is to the love of Jesus that we look for the creation of saints, not to ascetic practices or to the effort to attain a moral code; we become like Jesus not by imitation, but by love. It is to the love of Jesus that we look for the motive and inspiration of social service; a love which despairs of no man, seeks the depraved and outcast, is ready for any adventure on behalf of the abandoned, and has a passion for souls which will not only demand reforms but see that they do not miss their mark.

If this love for Jesus could become a passion, it would be able to accomplish anything. It would bring together the Churches by centripetal attraction with such force that it would overturn barriers and fuse oppositions and reconcile differences in the furnace of its love. What keeps the Churches apart is not fundamentally matters of doctrine or government or ritual, but love of self, love of party, love of property, instead of love of Jesus. Many things would be altered, but many things that some deemed dead would glow with meaning

and life. It is a question whether we want new vessels so much as we want new wine; our vessels were fashioned long ago to hold that wine which never grows old—adoring love for Jesus. It would give that new crusading spirit and passion for souls that we need to re-evangelize poor, sin-stricken Christendom. Before this consuming love difficulties would be overcome and unbelief conquered; nothing has ever yet been able to stand up against the consuming fire and contagious flame of love for Jesus.

(*b*) It is therefore the most vital and immediate reform we need.

No system, however perfect, can live by itself. It may be that here Catholicism has erred. It places so much emphasis upon the system that if it should fail or be doubted nothing whatever is left; without the Church there is no Christ. That is not so in normal Protestant experience, where, at any rate for a time, Christ can be held to when the Church is rejected. But Protestantism as it stands has become as dead as Catholicism, because there is no longer at the heart of it that love for Jesus which once anchored it to the Rock. We want the Church, but what will keep a man loyal to the Church is not the Church itself, but love for Him who loved the Church and purchased it with His blood.

This does not mean that we shall revive love for Jesus by attempting to make a Church that

consists solely of His devout lovers. We have tried this, and it has failed, simply because there is no human test for discovering who His true lovers are. The language of love can be learnt, and its very emotions simulated. We must leave the doors open for those who confess, those who crave, those who enquire; but we must keep burning clear at the centre this fire of love, so that all who enter the door may know what it is that keeps the Church alive, and what they will be drawn to if they dare to enter. They must know and see that this love for Jesus is a self-consuming, a wonderful and terrible experience, which carries a man beyond his own will and desire and makes him for ever the bond-slave of another. Unless people are willing for the supreme experience they had better keep outside.

Therefore if you are anxious for the revival of religion and the reformation of the Church, you must yourself get set on fire with this love. It is this which has been missing in some would-be reformers, but it is no use hoping to move the Church without it; especially if you come with proposals which leave this out, or which give to Jesus some place less lovable. The Church may be dead and blind; but not so dead and blind as not to know wherein her life consists. Therefore you must begin with *yourself*. It is no use bringing wonderful plans which you want others to carry out. *You* must bring the fire; the rest is easy.

Is this Principle Fundamentally Sound ?

1. It certainly meets the deepest and most universal need of man.

(*a*) We have to provide man with something to love.

The central thing that is wrong with man is a tragedy of love ; and we shall never get anything right for him until we have got rid of the source of unrest in his own dislocated personality, and the fountain of unhappiness in his distracted heart. Man was meant to be a dual personality ; he was made for another. And at present he is trying to get on *alone*. "Set love in order thou that lovest me," is the old advice, and it is not yet outworn.

We attempt to remedy this defect by false substitutes. The worst of all is to spend our soul's affections upon the pleasures of sin, the deceits of riches or the lust of possessions. It is not only the wreck of individual souls that can be traced to this, but the wreck of nations. The inner meaning of the world agony of this war is nothing else than that man, having lost his purpose in life and being without any satisfaction for his love, lands himself in all the false ambitions and idiotic rivalries and frenzied fears which at length bring him to this raving madness of slaughtering those he was meant to love and killing those on whom his welfare depends. It is a lesser, but still

a tragic mistake, when we imagine that we can console these hearts with the love of any other human being. When two human beings love God first and foremost, their love to one another may be a sacrament; when they do not, it can become the most unmitigated tragedy. We expect from our human lovers that perfection and infinity which we were made to find in God; and hence the disappointment and the unreason and at last the disgust. Least of all, but still a mistake, is it to try to love humanity as whole, to work for amelioration of human conditions, to fight for great human causes; for these need a love transcendent if they are going to be perserved in and if they are going to succeed.

Jesus Christ alone meets this tremendous need. He is infinite, but He became finite for us. He was incarnate, but He is an eternal spirit. He is a historic person, but He lives in every soul that breathes. You cannot love Him without loving those for whom He died, and you can love the very worst because He tests your love to Him through your love for them. In love of Jesus you have not only heart's ease for yourself, but you have heart entrance to every one; for you hold the key to the mysteries of their being. If there were no such person as Jesus, and if He were other than what His lovers have found Him to be, there would be no hope for man at all, neither personally, nor socially, nor internationally.

(*b*) But it might be questioned whether this love has not actually failed.

Have there not been cases where there was a passionate devotion to Jesus existing alongside hostility to others and a complete carelessness for the conditions under which men were living? It has to be admitted that there have been such cases, though they are probably fewer than is imagined. Sometimes what passes for love for Jesus has been nothing of the sort, but only love for oneself idealized with His name. Sometimes it is not love, but mere sentiment, which we are familiar with in other than religious persons. We all know the man who can write sonnets to his mistress's eyebrows, but who makes a very bad husband. Sometimes it is simply that love is unillumined by knowledge. Jesus is not well known; what is loved is only one side of His nature, a mere subtraction of what He is.

But where love is real, however imperfect it may be, even when, as with Peter, it is still rather a love of the heart than as yet a love of the will, it is a lever by which one can be lifted to a perfect obedience. You can never get full obedience without this love; with it you will. "If ye love me, ye *will* keep my commandments." You can face the lover with his unfaithfulness and you can do anything with him then. If only the world would use this lever, it could do anything with the Church. One wonders sometimes if all the

people who complain about the Church would like to see it any better; just as one wonders if all the people who complain about Germany really desire her repentance. The world does not want the Church reformed, despite all its array of complaint: it wants it destroyed. If it wanted it reformed, it would know how to set about it.

At any rate, here we are back upon Christ's own principle. It was the way He took with His most weak and betraying disciple. He went back to the question of love, and on that confession rehabilitated Peter. The Church has fallen and forsworn Christ scandalously; there need be no dispute about that; but Christ would rebuild the Church upon love alone. This thrusts us each back upon some important self-scrutiny.

2. Two questions are forced upon us.

(*a*) How can I gain this love?

It can only be generated as you learn how you are loved, and that can only be learned as you have Jesus revealed to you. When you see Him you cannot forbear to love Him. If you do not love Him, it must be that you have never seen Him, or that you have only partly seen Him, or that you have never realized His love for you. Believe nothing about Him that does not move you to passionate adoration and absolutely melting love. There are many false images of Him about; but they can never take in your heart, or move you to love.

If you long for that manifestation, it will be granted you. There has never been a soul awake to its need, but has not eventually awakened to Him. He has never cast out any that have come to Him praying for the sight of His face. Ask for it, and it shall be yours.

But remember there is one other possibility. When you see Him, you will be judged, you will be laid bare to the very depths of your soul. It is possible that you will not love Him, because it will be revealed that you are not love, and cannot love. About all that there is nothing more to be said.

(*b*) How can I be faithful to that love ?

That is a question I cannot answer. It is the most painful, desolating question that ever forces itself upon the lover of Jesus. Personally I would like to keep it dark that I had ever had any dealings with Him, so afraid am I that through my unlikeness and unfaithfulness to Him His fair fame should suffer and His glorious beauty be dimmed. I should much prefer that I need never preach His Name again, for I feel that every time I do so I bring down upon myself heavy judgment and upon Him the danger of obscuration and misunderstanding. And yet I cannot evade one hypocrisy by professing another.

The pain and pressure are heavier in these days than ever before. The fires and tortures of martyrdom are nothing to it. We know we are living

under a world-order that is built on anything but love, and we who profess to love Him, who really do love Him, if the truth must be wrung from us, are living either content, or confused, or impotent to rebuild the world. He looks upon us reproachfully from the faces of the poor and the outcast. He calls to us from those suffering and in prison for His Name. He shows His bleeding wounds in the thousands who lie in agony upon the battlefield. And we, His lovers, seem able to do nothing.

I can only suggest that we must let love have still more its way with us, until it has burnt up self, destroyed cowardice, taught us the royal way. We can only look to Him, cry after Him, let love of Him work our transformation. Perhaps that will come the swifter if we do all these things together with those who feel the same love. But it is a veritable purgatory. Still, it is better than hell. To fall in love with Jesus has frightful dangers, for Him, and for us. But they must be dared; and the rest we must leave to Love Himself.

The Social Significance of the Sacrament

"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not communion in the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not communion in the body of Christ? because there is one bread, we who are many, are one body; for we all share from the one bread."—1 CORINTHIANS x. 16, 17.

IT is one of the tragedies of Christendom that what was meant to be the great symbol of unity, the rallying-point of the whole Church, has become one of the greatest causes of dissension. One-half of Christendom makes the celebration of the Sacrament the central and dominating element of its worship, the very heart and soul of its religious life. The other half retains the Sacrament, but in an altogether subordinate position, an occasional addendum to worship, with obvious hesitation as to its meaning or value, and with the tendency towards getting rid of it altogether.

The excuse for this latter position is often based upon the exaggerated claims of the former. It is a protest against the superstition which has gathered round the rite; the superstition that a miracle takes place at the consecration by which the substance of bread and wine are transformed into the substance of Christ's flesh and blood, and then offered as a sacrifice for sin; which

seems to infringe upon the finished work of Christ on Calvary and to involve a physical notion which cannot be thought of without repulsion, and leads to idolatrous worship being paid to material things. It is a protest against the growth of ceremonial, which has transformed what was the homeliest rite into something half pageant and half drama; to the uninitiated or irreverent appearing so much mummery and provoking ridicule. It is a protest against making participation in a rite a means of grace, which offends against the spiritual nature of the Christian religion and leads to the dangerous notion that merely to perform or attend upon a ceremony secures the operation of Divine grace in the heart and life.

But however deep are the convictions upon which these protests rest, and however much they are made in the interests of spiritual religion, it ought always to be remembered that they cause great pain and sorrow to those to whom this worship is simple fidelity to Christ's command; whose belief about it is sanctioned by the deepest significance of His words, and whose internal experience of its efficacy is most sacred and convincing. It may be that the statement of the doctrines with which the Sacrament has been defended is responsible for much popular misunderstanding; but whatever transubstantiation means, it is not meant to have a crude physical connotation; as a devout Catholic once said indignantly to me, "We are not cannibals." It is the glorified Humanity that is believed to be partaken, a mystical idea too hard for some to reach; indeed, transubstantiation seems to be too spiritual, for it denies that the

material element remains after consecration. The growth of ceremonial is defended as an expression of the honour paid to the Author and President of the Feast; it serves to mark the wealth of experience which has gathered about it through centuries of observance, and it is employed to set forth the confident faith and exultant joy with which Christ's command is obeyed and His Presence acknowledged; and it is much more frequently celebrated with great plainness and simplicity.

Deep and painful as is the gulf that seems fixed between these two positions—and it may prove to be impassable and permanent—I venture to think that much is due to misunderstanding which could be removed: misunderstanding in one direction about doctrines framed during controversy; misunderstanding because Catholics have been too proud to condescend to an explanation; misunderstanding of the real spiritual concern which underlies much protest and objection; but also misunderstanding, in another direction, of the nature of Christianity, which is not merely spiritual, but sacramental—that is, spiritual by revealing the underlying basis of the material—and which especially is not individual but social. Indeed, it is to the uprising of the social consciousness that I look, if anywhere, for the bridging of this gulf.

The Sacrament is a Social Necessity.

1. It is demanded by the psychological necessities of corporate worship.

(*a*) We must first remember that it is an act of social worship.

It is a perfectly Christian position when any one maintains that the worship of God consists simply in reflecting His character in our own and in so living our common life that His Name is glorified; that is the worship of spirit and truth. But for the furthering of such worship we need continual reminders and continual dedication of the will; that is, we need inspiration and purpose. The inspiration is given by God and the purpose we have to make ourselves. Both may be secret, and almost unconscious. God moves upon our spirits, our spirits respond to Him; the outward effect is seen in our characters and in our life.

But it is a simple psychological fact that God's inspiration comes to us also through certain media. These are twofold: the material world and the social community; nature and man. One feels the presence of God in the glories and beauties of nature; forest and sea, mountain-top and stars move the soul to worship. And as God chooses media for His call, so does the soul for its response. When we hear the call, we not only go back to our life to live better; we want to answer and to vow there and then; and we do this by saying something and by saying it in a certain way: we kneel, or extend our hands, or lift our eyes to heaven. And this not only registers our purpose, it confirms and strengthens it.

Now, it is also a fact that when we receive this inspiration we want to speak about it to others, to impart it; and when we register this vow we feel we want to do it with some one else as witness. For we find there again that we gain in the presence of our fellows a deeper inspiration, and the registra-

tion of our purpose takes on a greater sanctity and strength. Common worship immensely reinforces personal consecration and influences social life. And we become aware of the Presence of God in common worship in a peculiar and positive sense.

(*b*) Now, such common worship has to have recourse to symbols for its expression.

There is no reason in the world why these should be confined to words. We have to admit that words are symbols and very inadequate ones, and that they come to us clouded with the individuality of those who utter them. At times they become positively wearying. If when we gather together we have to be continually reminded of why we are gathered together and what we ought to do, these directions in time lose their point, and often the more they are emphasized.

What man instinctively does is to construct the place where he worships so that it shall be a silent and unmistakable indication that it is meant for the worship of God; and in the best ages he goes to nature for its suggestion. He builds the cathedral branching like forest trees, he fills the roof with stars, he lets the light filter through the windows with all the glory of the sunset; he puts flowers and lights where they will catch the eye, and fills the place with incense. He uses music to call the people to worship, he inspires prayer by outward signs as well as by spoken petition, he surrounds the walls with pictures of the great events of sacred history, he sets the crucifix to preach in case the preacher should be unequal to the occasion.

But is not all this sensuous? Of course it is. But it was God who made the senses and it was God who played upon every one of them with light and colour, with scented breezes, and sound —murmuring in the trees, moaning in the sea, and thundering from the clouds. You can misuse these senses, of course: we have fallen far in our misuse of them. But Christianity comes not to cut the senses out as hopeless, but to redeem them. Just as there are immoral pictures and vicious poetry and demoralizing music, so man can frame, if he wills, sacred buildings that suggest that God is a monster, or proud, or a vulgar *nouveau riche*—though as a rule this is left to the heathen and the Philistines. We can employ music in church which is more suitable to a night club. But it is not a Christian cure, or even rational, to cut your eyes out, and stuff your noses, and yet leave your ears open when you go to church. What have the ears done to deserve this immunity? For preaching can be terribly seductive and work upon our feelings to the destruction of our souls.

2. The Sacrament enunciates a social message.

(*a*) Some who can allow symbolism in general find the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper still a difficulty.

They can understand sacramentalism in general, but not this particular sacrament. They can quite see how spiritual realities are ministered through the material and social medium; but the more they feel this, the less they feel there is any special sacrament, or that this one deserves any pre-eminence. The world is a sacrament,

of course, art is a sacrament; but this sacrament seems to be too physical, too common. To mix up such vulgar things as eating and drinking with the subtle acts of spiritual communion brings things together which they prefer to have left apart.

Or if they have got as far as seeing that a meal can be a real sacrament of fellowship, and if they have realized that the life of the soul within the body does depend in some degree upon what you eat and drink, then they feel the Sacrament is not sufficiently like a meal. They believe that Christ must have meant that whenever you sit down to a meal you ought to realize His Presence, and that grace before meat is the best way of acknowledging this presence; or that the old Agape, or love feast, or a Mission ham-jam-and-glory tea would offer better opportunities. While some think the Sacrament too common an act, others think it has been refined away until it seems trivial and unreal.

Perhaps the New Testament itself might be considered some sort of guide here. Our Lord did indeed set apart a particular act of eating and drinking: but as a matter of fact it was obviously meant to be symbolical, for it followed a meal already symbolic. He selected certain elements from the table and distributed them in what must have been small portions; He did say, not "Whenever ye eat and drink," but "Do THIS in remembrance of Me." We know that later St. Paul found that the mixing up of the Communion with the Agape led to irreverent observance, and the complete obscuring of its intended signi-

ficance. Our Lord chose a common act, but He set it apart for its symbolical value ; and whatever deeper meaning some of us demand, we can all discern the value of this rite as guiding us to a common realization of the Presence of Christ, and can regard the material elements as Christ's own chosen signs and seals of His promise to be present.

(*b*) But it carries a deeper social significance than mere symbolism.

Our Lord did not say, "This bread is a symbol of My life broken for you." His way of expressing that we have elsewhere in the saying "I am the bread of life"; when of course He did not mean that He was bread, but that what bread was to the body He was to the soul. But in the words of institution the analogy is the other way round. "This is My body." Now, this could not mean that the bread was His physical body, for His physical body was already present, and He did not offer that to the Apostles to eat; but it must mean that the bread is to serve as His body, that is to say, He takes these things, when they are set apart for this purpose, and He uses them as He used His body on earth, to manifest His nearness and to be the element of His giving of Himself to us. This theory has the advantage of being primitive, of involving no superstition, and yet of making room for the very highest conception of the Sacrament that any one can desire. In the Bread and Wine Christ gives Himself in the same way as in the Incarnation.

But the taking of the material elements of life and using them in this way was not an arbitrary

choice, or merely convenient. It definitely connected the highest spiritual communion with the common necessities of sustenance. In the bread and wine we have nature's products to which man has added his labour. When we set these apart, we offer them to our Lord to use as He desired ; but therein we offer Him symbolically both the fruits of earth and man's labour to be the medium of His sacramental Presence. There is in every Eucharistic rite a great deal made of the offering ; and it is symbolical of the offering of the first-fruits. The Church has never authorized that extremely popular Festival, the Harvest Thanksgiving, because it has a harvest thanksgiving at every Eucharist. With deep insight Christ chose for the offering of the New Covenant neither the blood sacrifice of Abel nor the mere fruits of the earth which Cain preferred : but the fruits of earth on which human labour has been expended. We therefore offer all human labour at every Eucharist.

The teaching of all this is of the most profound and important character. It prevents that despising of the material which is so common, but so dangerous a heresy, with many who seek the spiritual ; it protests against the desecration of food and drink which is such a characteristic of civilization ; and above all it testifies against the dishonouring of human labour which is the great crime of our industrialism. It teaches us that if we consecrate our common necessities and offer our labour to God, then He will make it the means of communion with Him ; if only we are willing to have one common Table and share and share alike

as in something precious and holy. If we have no sense of God to-day, it is because we have turned that which was meant to be Holy Communion into unholy competition.

All the Controversies about the Sacrament are Really Social.

1. Consider the whole question of validity.

(*a*) There is no question which has been more badly handled.

We are presented with the awful notion that the validity of the Sacrament depends upon whether the person who celebrates it is qualified to do so, and this qualification is not a matter of personal holiness, but of ordination received in the succession from the Apostles; to which the Protestant replies with what I am afraid is the equally awful declaration that its validity entirely depends upon the spiritual condition of the recipient. Both really make any assurance impossible. There is no historical evidence which can guarantee that the succession has been preserved. There has been no attempt to preserve it in most Protestant bodies; it is doubtful in Anglicanism, it cannot be proved of Rome itself. On the other hand, I want to come to the Communion sure that, whether I deserve it or not, and by no means in proportion to my spiritual condition, Christ will give Himself to me. The Catholic does not say that it will make no difference to you what condition you are in; he says that Christ will give Himself to you whatever your condition, but where there is no receptivity it

will not make *no* difference; it will make all the difference: it will work your condemnation.

Let us get to the inner meaning of this controversy; it is not so unimportant as it would seem. What do we mean by validity? Valid means strong, and what makes our confidence in the Sacrament strong, is first of all Christ's own promise to be present. The minimum that is required to secure His promise being fulfilled is that we set apart bread and wine and use His words; that is how consecration is always held to be effected. Does it matter who does it? Now, here comes in the social implication. The Sacrament is essentially social; it is the meeting of Christ, not with the individual soul, but with the Church. In necessity, I believe that any one could celebrate the Sacrament *for himself*, and Christ's promise would stand sure; but when a man celebrates for others they will want to know that he intends what they desire, and this they can know if they have chosen him to do that very thing for them. Since it is an act of the Church, it will have validity in the degree that it is truly representative of the Church; and obviously there are degrees of that validity. It is something to have one's commission handed down from distant ages; the further back the better: it means that you have received your commission from those now gone, and it represents the seal of the Church triumphant. It is not everything; the mere succession does not carry with it the recognition of the whole Church; but it is something, and very valuable. But what is wanted to make the validity of the strongest order

is recognition by the whole Church. Now, so long as the Church is divided, that greatest of all validities is wanting.

(*b*) But this question of validity carries other implications.

We have seen that the offering we make is intended to be a symbol of the offering of all the material elements of life and of all labour to the service of God. But if the symbol is contradicted by the actual life we are living, it is more than empty; it becomes something perilously like offering to God a lie. I believe that one reason why the meaning of the Sacrament is so inconceivable to many people to-day is that it corresponds to nothing in our common life; and until we get a better ordering of labour and a better distribution of food we shall *never* realize what it means.

In celebrating the Sacrament we act for the Church as a whole: and what pain it ought to cause us as we realize that our offering can only be prophetic of a day yet to be when the Church is truly one. There is something more. In the Sacrament our Lord seeks to incorporate our humanity into His own, to make all mankind His body. Until we are able to offer Him the worshipping allegiance of all mankind there must be something wanting in the satisfaction of His heart. We come to the Table to get fed, but we go away with a new hunger in our hearts—hunger for the souls for whom Christ died.

Yet I do not think it follows that we must abandon our Sacrament until the Church is united, the social order is Christianized, and all

humanity has come home to God and is seated at the Table of the Lord; though there will be always in our Eucharist a sad, wistful note, and something of positive pain until it truly represents all life. We confess there that which we wish to be true; and we must there affirm our hope, and dedicate ourselves to make it true.

2. The same point of view explicates the sacrificial element in the Eucharist.

(*a*) This claim need not excite offence.

The idea that the Eucharist is a sacrifice for sin is said to infringe upon the one perfect sacrifice of Christ; and the whole idea is therefore dismissed as a blasphemous fable. I am not going to adopt the highly doubtful hypothesis that the words "this do" can be made to mean "this sacrifice." But even on the mere memorial theory of the Supper, it is the memorial of a sacrifice. The words were not only spoken under the shadow of the cross, they give us Christ's last thought about the meaning of what He was going to accomplish. It is His body broken and given for us; it is blood shed for the remission of sins. The idea of sacrifice cannot be eliminated from the commemoration; if it is only a commemoration, it is the commemoration of a sacrifice.

There is, however, a way of understanding this idea which has been prepared for us by the modern view of Christ's sacrifice, which rightly feels that it is not complete until there has been an identification of ourselves with the cross. This need not be pressed to mean that we are saved not by what Christ did for us, but rather by something that we have to do for ourselves in

imitation of Him. But justice is done both to the liberal craving and the language of the New Testament when we affirm that there is something lacking in the sufferings of Christ which we have to fill up, not for ourselves but for others, for the sake of His Body the Church. All the primitive liturgies emphasize the idea that we offer ourselves in mystical union with the offering of Christ, which not only lifts our poor self-offering on to another plane, but also gives to His offering something which moves it nearer to its consummation.

It is in accordance with these principles that we may believe that there is given to us the awful power of perfecting Christ's offering and of directing its application. If we come to the Altar with this intention, and the necessity for doing so is clearly set forth in the rite, then there does take place a direction of spiritual power of which we have only just begun to dream. If we believe that prayer can release or direct the saving intention of God, why should we hesitate to believe that in this greatest of all prayers we are able to redintegrate humanity into God and bind His whole world afresh about Him? It is not too much to claim that Christ crucified puts Himself into our hands, and what we do with that sacrifice here on earth is done in heaven.

(*b*) Here is a most solemn call to exercise our priesthood.

It will not be wrong to remind ourselves of the dangers which so many have felt about all these ideas and especially about their symbolical representation; not to conclude that the presence

of such dangers means that we ought not to do this thing, but rather that we ought to do the thing more carefully. If we take our priesthood seriously, we shall feel that we are engaged in the most sacred of all offices, and we cannot escape the consequences if we should discharge it carelessly. The Catholic theory, while it does not hold that your personal faith and spiritual condition determine the validity of the Sacrament, does hold that it makes a tremendous difference in its effect upon yourself; and surely it must in its effect upon the world.

Let us remember then that we are members of the one body. Sometimes persons object to sacramentalism not for their own sakes, but for others who they think may be harmed by failing to understand. I think we had better remember that all such possibilities are overcome by our spiritual intention. Let us not suspect the interior life of others of which we know nothing, but look after ourselves. And yet let us remember that others will depend upon us. If we are sluggish and careless, they will miss something that otherwise might be theirs. Above all, let us remember to put away all animosities, first with all our fellow-Christians, and then with all our enemies, and then with all the world. Here we can do a work of reconciliation and a work of peace beyond all imagining. We can stand in between the forces of destruction; we can gather all the world unto God.

But Christ here calls us into communion, not only with one another and with the whole world, but with Himself and His redeeming work. He

calls us to so deep an intimacy with Him that we can perhaps hardly express it in words: but we may take the efforts to translate this word "communion" as an ascending interpretation of what is meant. It is the *communication* of His Body and Blood; He gives Himself, and all the benefits of His Passion, to us. But it is more than communication, it is *communion*, something which we share in common with others. It is *fellowship*; we actually share with Him in His redeeming work. Therefore in communion with the whole Church, together with all the redeemed, living and dead, in sympathy with this sin-stained, suffering, needy world, and in fellowship with Jesus Christ the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, let us make a pure offering and a perfect oblation unto God.

The Cleansing of the Temple

MARK xi. 15–17; JOHN ii. 13–21.

LOOKED at whichever way you will, this is a most extraordinary incident. From the common point of view that Jesus cared nothing for the external expression of religion, it is both unexpected and perplexing. According to that view Jesus was the preacher of a merely inward religion and an entirely invisible kingdom; He was, therefore, opposed to all forms and ceremonies, regarded all ritual as useless, and was a veritable iconoclast against all sacred places, observances, and outward acts of worship. Yet here we have Him taking part in the reform of a worship which by His own prediction was soon to pass away, in cleansing a Temple which He foresaw was soon to be left without one stone standing upon another, and to be superseded by that spiritual Temple, His Body, built up of men for its living stones. The action that this point of view expects is either a studious avoidance of the Temple altogether, or that He should deal with its vain worship in the spirit of Oliver Cromwell, who, stalking into the parish church at St. Ives and finding the parson reading the Book of Common Prayer, commanded him to "stop

that fooling and come down." On the contrary, Jesus has no word to say against priest or sacrifice, no protest against lights or incense, but only against the irreverence and sacrilege of allowing trading to be carried on even in the outer court of the Temple, which, with the chaffering of merchants and the lowing of beasts, disturbed the worship of the House of God and invaded the sacred precincts with the commerce of every day.

From another point of view this action of Jesus is equally unexpected. Regarded as the great Teacher of non-resistance, here we find Him using physical force to carry out what was perhaps a much-needed reform, but in a way which seems entirely out of keeping with His own teaching and usual manner. This exhibition of indignation seems so entirely unlike "gentle Jesus, meek and mild," the picture of Him which often dominates both artistic and ethical conceptions of His character. It must have been a flaming wrath which could have so taken every one by storm, that no resistance was forthcoming from those to whom His action, disturbing an ancient custom and destroying a legitimate trade, must have seemed an unwarrantable interference, or else the act of some person out of his mind. To those whose pacifism is really passivism, and whose entanglements in discussions have led them to regard all force as something in itself evil, the whole action seems to be ethically indefensible and marks a lamentable fall from grace; and that whip of small cords with which John further embellishes the picture falls upon their

conscience with a terrible sting. To think of Jesus deliberately plaiting this terrible weapon of violence, and thus preparing for an offensive against these defenceless and peaceful tradesmen, is to consider something incomprehensible, and leaves them silent when this action is quoted as a Divine sanction for the use of bayonets, bombs, poison gas, and liquid fire. If it can be explained away, it is at least a pity that Jesus committed Himself to an action which has given rise to so much misunderstanding. All of which goes to show that we really must read the Gospels again, and read them a little more carefully, and when we come to apply them to the circumstances, try to summon up a sense of humour.

This Action of Jesus is Really Highly Significant.

1. It is entirely typical of His character.

(*a*) The nature of Jesus was one that was easily moved.

Jesus was not a person to take things calmly. He felt, and He felt profoundly. The depth of His feeling of compassion is pictured in the bold New Testament speech, in terms for which our language has no polite equivalent. Often His own spirit was so moved within Him that He groaned in anguish; and if, as one daring writer has said, He had to conceal His laughter, He made no attempt to conceal His tears. His indignation was capable of a fierceness which left men speechless before Him; and when He cared to express Himself in condemnation, He left men's characters bare and black as a forest after a fire.

This is a mark of all great natures: their capacity to feel. Out of the depth of feeling springs not only all reforming zeal and artistic creation, but also intellectual vigour. Thought is often spoken of as if it were the clear, fine cutting of some cold and calculating machine. So it may be; but that machine has to be driven by hidden fires, and only works under high pressure. Why we stand to-day so baffled by the awful evil of war is that most of us are callous. The people who ought to be able to feel do not; they either have no imagination, or they refuse to allow it to work, and smother up all the anguish of the hour with fine phrases and shut their eyes to the slaughter because of some vision which they believe it will somehow bring nearer. Faced with the actuality, either the fine phrase or the slaughter would have to be abandoned.

But what is even more astonishing than the depth of feeling in Jesus is the things that moved Him. The presence of suffering which is as old as the hills, and which in Palestine then, as now, paraded its misery as a commercial asset, stirred Jesus to put forth healing power that taxed His strength to the limit, and strove for an equal place beside His religious teaching. It was His giving Himself to this instead of to some great national action that caused John the Baptist to doubt whether, after all, He was the Messiah. You will remember, too, how the sight of great multitudes or the vision of a great city shook His nature as by a storm; so great was His yearning for the souls of men and His grief at their blindness. It is only because we do

not share His mighty conscience that we are amazed at the outburst of righteous wrath to which the Temple profanation stirred Him.

(*b*) It is not surprising that He was moved by this.

You might collect from the Gospels many indications that Jesus was by no means unconcerned for the due place being given to the reverent observance of religion. The only ritual He ever objected to was that which had been imposed by the Pharisees without authority—the back-garden ritual of tithing mint, anise and cummin, which tended to make the whole business burdensome and ridiculous. Whenever He contrasted ritual observance with ethical practice, He never dreamed of the modern proposal that the ritual should be dropped; but instead demanded that what it signified should be carried out in conduct. "This ye ought to have done, and not have left the other undone" sums up His general attitude.

With this general principle in view, His attitude to the profanation of the Temple is quite explicable. Jesus had attended the plain services of the synagogue and had taken an active part in them. That fits in with what many can understand. But when He came to the Temple, where the worship was of a quite different character (as different as High Mass at Westminster Cathedral from a Free Church service), the only thing He objected to was that which was out of keeping with the general spirit of the worship, the distracting arrangements of the Temple forecourt. According to Mark, it was not only the selling and buying and the general commercial atmosphere,

but the way in which people used that part of the Temple as a right of way, as if it had no more significance than any ordinary street in Jerusalem. It is difficult to see how Jesus could have felt this unless He believed that some special sanctity attached to the Temple and its worship.

His indignation at this carelessness and unseemliness was heightened by the fact that it was the Court of the Gentiles that was given over to this sacrilege. Gentiles were admitted to the Temple area, but only to the outer court; between this and the Holy Place was a barrier on which a notice threatened with death any Gentile who dared to pass beyond. When that part of the Temple in which alone the heathen could worship was treated in this way, and thus all quiet was made impossible and prayer liable to be disturbed by secular invasion, Jesus was stirred to make the most violent protest possible.

2. It was a symbolic act carrying a wealth of meaning.

(*a*) It showed who He claimed Himself to be.

There was a Messianic prophecy which predicted that the Messiah would suddenly come to His Temple, and there would act as a Cleanser and as Refiner of the religious life of the nation. His action was therefore an unmistakable claim to be "the angel of the covenant." So typical and symbolical of Christ's mission does John make this act to be that in his Gospel it is placed at the very commencement of the ministry; and there the words used are, "Make not My Father's House a house of merchandise." Here we see how Jesus connected Himself with the revelation of the past

and what peculiar intimacy with God He claimed. It does not mean that Jesus approved of all the predictions, or that He accepted all the conceptions of God that Jewish worship stood for; but here was a House built for the worship of God. That God was His Father, and He claimed the right to intervene and reject anything that was unworthy.

It was not merely the merchandise that was objected to. If the Temple services were to be carried on, some such convenience was necessary. It is in the contrast between the true ideal of the Temple and its actual use that our Lord seized upon. With His frequent practice of bringing isolated Scriptures together in illuminating fashion, He quoted Isaiah, "My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations"; and then added to it a word from Jeremiah, "But ye have made it a den of robbers." Not only had Jewish exclusiveness failed to rise to the height of Isaiah's prediction and open the Temple to all who cared to come; but they had even destroyed the worth of the concession they had made, by delivering over the Court of the Gentiles to another purpose.

But there is something deeper in this application of Jeremiah's phrase, "a den of robbers." It is too strong for the extortion that it is assumed was practised upon the pilgrims who had to change their foreign money or purchase sacrifices. It was the action of the authorities who had kept for themselves what had been intended for the world which deserved this description. The letting of the Court of the Gentiles to traders, out of which

the High Priests made a considerable revenue, was only typical of their whole religious policy. They regarded Jehovah and His worship as a family preserve, something to add to their prestige rather than something to make free to the whole world.

(*b*) But there was something symbolical in the way in which He carried out this protest.

It has often been quoted as a sanction of the use of force for carrying out reforms. It is a pity that the case has been given away by the idea that the use of force is at all times wrong. One has to recall that Jesus used force to get into the Temple: one is using natural force all the time one lives. The distinction ought to be drawn at the use of injurious force in such a way as to destroy its moral appeal. Surely this distinction is most carefully observed in this act of Jesus. The Fourth Gospel, when carefully translated, seems to infer that the whole thing was carried out with a nice observance of where it was right to use force and where it was not. The scourge of small cords was used to drive out the sheep and oxen; the persons who sold doves were told to take them hence: the tables of the moneychangers were overthrown. One treatment for animals, another for birds, and another for men: and a nice distinction between persons and property.

But if this is too subtle to build upon, and we have to consider that Jesus may have thus armed Himself for an attack upon men, surely we can still see that it was a symbolical rather than an efficient weapon. What does stand out is the

moral courage of the act, and the moral challenge it conveyed. As far as the use of force was concerned, we must remember that He faced the whole market alone, and that men were paralysed against resistance because they knew He was in the right. It is the most splendid example of solitary and unarmed warfare that we need to look for. It is symbolical of just that kind of warfare that Christ does believe in: attacking evil by the force of moral indignation alone, and in such a way as to expose yourself to all the resistance that can be gathered.

How can this be used to sanction military warfare? What distinguishes that warfare, even when undertaken for righteous reasons, is its cowardice. It does not believe in the power of moral appeal; it knows that it will be resisted and therefore it prepares for resistance. And it is driven by the force of its own logic to every meanness, lying, deception, and subterfuge that the mind of man can think of. Modern warfare ought to be repudiated by all chivalrous and heroic souls as something too utterly foul for them to touch. And when we come to its moral effects, what a difference! It is often said that the only way you can teach some people is by the use of force. It is doubtful enough in the case of the education of children; it is still more dubious in the punishment of criminals; but in the armed punishment of nations all moral lessons are dissipated. Whom has war ever taught anything? What fair cause has it not dragged in the mire? How often has it not more deeply entrenched the evils it seeks to overthrow! When you go

to war against an unscrupulous enemy, all you do is to convince him that you have other designs; and there are enemies behind your back who will provide him with plenty of evidence that his surmise is correct. And when war is undertaken to prove that militarism, that is whole-hearted preparation for war, is wrong, that the appeal to force is a mistake, one hears all hell moved to laughter.

What Application of this Act ought we to make to Ourselves?

1. It has something to say to the Church's provision for worship.

(*a*) There ought to be nothing to disturb reverence.

In some of our Churches outward reverence is made a very great deal of, and in others it is abandoned. Sometimes the difference is said to be due to different conceptions of God. Those who like a free-and-easy worship say that the reverence practised in some Churches is merely an outward form and need not carry with it any inner acknowledgment; for inner reverence is a true idea of God. Moreover, it savours of servility, which ought not to characterize the behaviour of children in their Father's House. There is no more reverence due to a special building than to any other place. And in answer the other side will talk about good manners, will be able to quote this incident, and will claim that the House of God is different from all other places.

The matter does not seem to have been adequately thought out by either side. What should govern Christian ideas of reverence is

that the church building is a house of prayer. It is a place where people come to pray, and nothing should take place there which would hinder that purpose. It is this which should dictate our behaviour in church. If people cannot pray there undisturbed and without it seeming at all curious, we are doing them a very grievous wrong. It is this, and not slavish or superstitious ideas of God's worship, which should determine our reverence. It is for this reason that we should refrain from talking and obtrusive behaviour. If the externals of worship mean nothing to God, they mean a great deal for our fellow-men.

Everything that can create the sense of God's nearness and reality should therefore be encouraged in the house of prayer. It should be made so that people *can* pray in it; it should *look* like a house of prayer; and every means should be taken to encourage people to pray there. For spiritual experiences leave their mark upon material surroundings and make it easy for others to feel God near. Whether Christ was once buried in what is now the Church of the Holy Sepulchre may be doubted; but it is only of less sanctity that so many generations have prayed there in that faith. Whether the reservation of the Blessed Sacrament does make any difference to a building is a matter on which Christian people are disagreed; but the fact that so many people have there sought the most intimate presence of their Lord surely makes some difference. There is much in this incident which demands that our Lord believed in a special presence, and many believe that in His

new Temple He provided for its continued and even deepened recognition; but at any rate His action shows that He strongly deprecated anything that would desecrate the house of prayer or distract those who sought there the presence of God.

(*b*) Everything should make the House of God welcome to the stranger.

It was not for the habitual worshippers, not for those who had entrance into the Holy Place, that Jesus was concerned, but for those who were admitted only on a lower plane and who would feel the more easily any sign that they were not welcome. The application of this principle would transform our churches, and demand a change in many of our actions. Some people seize upon the custom of selling books and pamphlets at the church doors as deserving a like condemnation; but really this is so only if worship is thereby hindered. A far less literal and much deeper application is needed.

The application demanded is that strangers within our gates ought to be made specially welcome, that those who are not in the habit of coming to church ought to be made to feel quite at home. It is difficult to know always how to do this. What attracts one person to a church would determine some never to go again. When a man goes to church because he is inquiring what Christianity means, or surreptitiously feeling his way back to God, often the last thing he desires is that he should be noticed or pounced upon. Perhaps the very best thing we can do for him is to let it be seen that we are there to

worship God. It is a subtle impression to convey; but it can be done by those who are equally alive to the presence of God and of their neighbour.

Perhaps to-day those who correspond most closely to the Gentiles of our Lord's time are the poor and the working classes. And I should think what operates in their case to make them feel that the House of God is no place for them is the appropriation of pews and the contrast their dress would make with the ordinary well-dressed worshipper. These are matters difficult to adjust; but they ought to prove not impossible to those of us who are determined that the outward arrangements of our church shall express our real convictions about God and man. If we cannot free the pews, we ought at least to recognize that a pew-rent gives no right of possession. And people would probably confer a real blessing upon some of their fellow-worshippers if they did not wear clothes in church which cast every one else's into the shade. These seem small matters, but it is small things which account for large defections from church attendance.

2. Some see in Christ's acting a condemnation of the whole principle of trade for profit.

(*a*) This is a very staggering suggestion.

We can be quite certain that our Lord did not share the snobbish idea that trade, especially of the retail variety, is a vulgar calling unfitting a person for high society. We can also be sure Jesus had no false ascetic views regarding man's dependence upon material necessities, or He would never have ordained the Sacraments.

But it is equally certain that He did lay down the fundamental idea that we should serve one another not for reward or private gain; and it is very questionable whether we can square this ideal with the whole motive in which trade and service and labour are carried out in our industrial system. If the inducement of gain is necessary in order to get us to work at all, it shows what a thoroughly rotten state we are in; and we know how much that inducement creates false needs, adulterates our food, foists on us cheap and nasty substitutes, and constructs a competitive system which has nothing to do with devising how best man's necessities can be supplied, but only who can make most out of them.

Christendom has not yet considered whether behind Christ's warning against the accumulation of riches there must not lie a condemnation of the whole profit system, and whether therefore the Gospel does not demand an alternative economic system. There is no proof that the Temple merchants demanded extortionate profits; it seems as if a profit-making merchandise, however legitimate, was sufficient to defile the courts of God's House. And it is an awful thought that somehow this war, despite all its great ideals, should nevertheless have its roots in commercial competition between rival industrial groupings. If war is the natural outcome of the competitive system, then its real character surely now stands declared.

(*b*) Religion must face this question.

Religion must recognize how it depends upon the economic system. Our worship cannot

escape entanglement with the things of this world. Any attempt simply to drive them out of mind, and then think that the problem is solved, must soon show its futility. Religion is carried on by dependence upon material elements; and if those elements cannot be sanctified for the service of religion, religion becomes an enervating hypocrisy. A great deal of the vague scepticism of our times has nothing whatever to do with intellectual doubt, but is a half-conscious feeling that the dream of Christianity is impossible; and men are no longer willing to go on worshipping an ideal on Sundays which they know that they cannot carry into practice through the rest of the week. We must solve this dilemma, or else be content to see religion patronized by those who can keep religion in one compartment and business in another, and have Christianity accepted only by those who never ask searching questions.

The solution of our economic problem is made by our Lord the prelude to our entering upon eternal life. It is by the management of our money that we are to secure friendships in the eternal world. That means something rather more than the idea that if we give our money to beggars we shall find that we shall be welcomed in heaven by those we have helped on earth. The strange saying of our Lord about making to ourselves friends by means of the unrighteous mammon must neither be stiffly literalized, nor vaporized into a vague spirituality. It must mean that the solution of the economic problem is set us in this world as our real preparation for

enjoying the riches of eternity. We are only slowly waking up to the fact that there is an economic problem; but it has already begun to darken our possibility of enjoying heaven, at least in advance.

The ideal that seems to be set before us by this incident is by no means that which would appear at first sight; namely, a more clear-cut division between the spiritual and the secular, between religion and commerce, but such a purification of the latter as shall make it no longer a desecration of the House of God. In fact, there is an ideal sense in which trade ought to be represented in the vestibule of the House of God; for that is where, as a matter of fact, it is. We cannot worship God here on earth unless we first satisfy our material and physical needs; and somehow we have got to discover how we can bring the one into line with the other. That Jesus should have dared to make the symbols of our physical necessity also the symbols of His presence contains the assurance that there is no real enmity between them, and is a prophecy of the day when we shall be able to dedicate the whole of that side of our life to the service of God, of a day when all work shall be worship, all commerce pure, and private gain shall no longer disfigure and desecrate that service of one another's needs, which, if truly rendered, becomes service to Christ Himself.

The True Patriotism

"For now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly."—HEBREWS xi. 16.

THIS explanation of what it was which supported the patriarchs in their wanderings may seem to us too mystical for the actual facts of life, and any commendation of it to the modern mind delusive, if not even dangerous. That weariness of earth and that longing for heaven which was the subject of so many of the older hymns has come to be regarded as a relaxing sentimentalism, rarely real, as may be discovered when we are threatened by a sudden call to the homeland we have sighed for; sometimes sheer hypocrisy, under guise of which we beg off the duties of earthly citizenship; and always inimical to that social concern on which the betterment of this world depends.

The dream of a perfect life only realizable beyond the grave would seem logically to involve that it was little use trying to perfect life here below. But every one ought to know that this is rather a perversion of the Christian view of things. Christianity holds to the faith of a perfect life

beyond this, a heavenly realm in which the will of God is done; but it ever prays and strives for the coming of that heavenly kingdom on earth and the doing here of the will of God even as it is done in heaven. But it is questionable if even the perversion of the Christian idea has done half the harm which follows upon the adoption of the idea that there is no life beyond, and that heaven is nothing more than a dream. Concentration upon this life, as all there is, has proved to be the worst enemy this life can have. It has overwhelmed all idealism under the idea of *Real-politik*—the conception of national prestige which measures everything by the size of territory, the fiscal revenues, the domination of other countries either by commerce or military might. All this can go along with effective measures of social concern, good housing and high wages for the workmen, and a concern for the education and health of the people. The old-fashioned dream of heaven might lead to the notion that perhaps it could be brought nearer to earth; the refusal to look beyond this life results only in a well managed hell.

The reaction of this secular outlook upon patriotism is also evident. What has come to be called patriotism is no longer concern for your country's welfare so much as fear of some other country's progress; it is not so much love of your neighbours as hatred of your enemies. It leads to delusive

judgments which drive nations to madness and destruction; within the atmosphere it creates, truth is suffocated and comes to be regarded as a species of treason; and as it invites nation after nation to indulge in the same intoxication, so it dooms the world to a cycle of gigantic wars which must at last leave this habitable planet a globe of blood and fire, to wander in the heavens a cosmic tragedy, the star that committed suicide.

It is no wonder that one of the greatest minds of the nineteenth century came to regard patriotism as the most dangerous delusion of mankind. And when one sees the type of person who passes for a lover of his country to-day, merely because he surpasses others in the oratory of hate, one discovers how true Johnson's blustering dictum can be: "Patriotism is the last refuge of a scoundrel."

But does religion, and especially Christianity, leave no place for patriotism? And can it be that patriotism is only safe when it is the love of heaven?

Patriotism is Always the Love of an Invisible Ideal.

1. We can test that by our love for our own country.

(*a*) The England men love and are ready to die for is not any actual existence.

It is not the *land* we love. It is not just so many square miles of earth left fronting the devouring sea when Western Europe sank and let in the Atlantic. Although poets may sing them, it is not its delicate smallness, nor its modest beauties, nor its temperate climate; for all these things we call England, only by subtracting all the disadvantages, by forgetting all the ugly stretches, and all the sodden, chilly, foggy days. We think rather of some rare day in April, with daffodils and cherry-blossom and a blackbird calling; of a leafy lane in late June, when the trees are still myriad emerald, the hedges fresh, and the sun graciously tempered either for walking or for rest. It is England at its beautifullest and best, for a glimpse and an hour. But England is a good deal else, and often otherwise. Nay, is it ever so beautiful as we picture it? What we love is heaven filtered through a sacrament of earth, transubstantiated for a moment on the altar of desire by some miraculous word.

It cannot be the habitations we have builded on the land, the houses we call homes. A hamlet or a village by the sea may be nice to live in for a month. There are towns which look attractive from the train. But what shall be said for the towns that are like diseased eruptions on the country-side, for the cities which are full of festering sores, for the places where the earth's body has been slaughtered and disembowelled and left

rotting and obscene? Yet it is for some of these places men die, some of them they call "home." It *cannot* be the place itself.

Then is it the English people? We think of the English character: truthful, steady, reliable, brave, with a love of fair play, easily forgiving, rejoicing in a healthy laugh. But if this was an actual portrait, should we have so many cases of indecent assault on little children, would our streets swarm with prostitutes, would some of our newspapers get sold or read, and should we have hate-posters like those which are now disfiguring our hoardings? We say these things are not English. But they occur in England. It is plain that the English character we love is not what we are, so much as what we admire.

(*b*) It is the same of every country.

When we hear another country boasting of its virtues, speaking of its destinies, claiming to be the people, we not only fail to recognize the description—the thing moves us alternately to ridicule and to rage. Think of the sarcasm we feel when our enemies talk of Kultur and boast of themselves as the guardians of civilization and as destined by their religion to become supreme over all the nations of the earth. Think of the anger that rises in us when we hear them speak of their sharp sword and their glittering armour and their invincible might, which is going to decide the issues of the hour. And then imagine how

perhaps we appear to them when we talk about fighting for small nations, to liberate subject races, and appeal to our invincible Navy and our chivalrous Army and our purely disinterested motives.

The Bible itself gives us an excellent example of this double appearance. Think of the poetry spent on Palestine, the ideals that gather round the city Jerusalem. The modern traveller for the most part can see nothing in that barren land and less in that dirty city to suggest anything of the kind. It must have been some holy land of dreams, some heavenly Jerusalem, that inspired them. And what of the people? Here is a Book which owes its existence to the belief that the Jews were God's elect people, chosen to reveal truth to the world, to be the depositaries of the oracles of God and the examples of His grace, to give a language to the Word of God and features in which the glory of God might be seen to shine. Yet the Jews have never been loved by other nations; indeed, they create an instinctive dislike which still manifests itself in the violent hatreds of anti-Semitism.

See any land as it is; see any people as they appear to their enemies when they are at war—as the North appeared to the South in the American Civil War; read the history, not as they write it but as the impartial historians of the future will write it, with all its cruelties, its betrayals,

its internal strifes, its meanness and selfishness, its persecution of its prophets and neglect of its great men, and you will have to conclude either that patriotism is one of the great delusions of peoples or that it refers to something quite invisible and unseen.

2. Yet patriotism is not a delusion, but a Divine inspiration.

(*a*) It is how God trains the nations.

Nationality, that elusive quality, at least demands two constituents: a definite impression of character made upon outsiders, and a clear consciousness of distinction from others felt by a people themselves; and it is evidently the wise economy of God that within the boundaries that are set them nations should specialize their genius, develop distinctive gifts, and grow aware of something peculiar in God's concern for them.

Israel's sense of vocation is simply a special and acute consciousness of what every nation feels. And there was nothing that was either national delusion or Divine favouritism in this election. The greatest gift of God could not be given without specialization, without one nation being trained to bring forth the Saviour of the world. What was perverted in this was the pride and exclusivism which disfigured Israel's self-consciousness, and which had to be smashed out of her through centuries of suffering.

But we can dimly see that in their degree all

the nations have had some particular part to play, have been called upon to bring some gift to perfection, in order that they might the better take their part in the human family, and the better impart that gift to the whole world. We can see how Greece was called to perfect the idea of beauty and Rome of order. We are just beginning to discern what the gift of the East is for the world. We may dream of what Russia, of what America is going to give to the world. And there is not one of the combatants in the World War which had not something to give: and if they had understood how to give, it would have made such a war impossible.

(*b*) But this patriotism is safe only as its basis is understood.

It must be recognized as an essentially spiritual thing. No patriotism is worth the name that cannot be described by the words of our text: "they seek a better country." It is not what nations are, but what they may become, which is to be their inspiration. And it ought to be recognized with ease that the things on which they pride themselves are ideals rather than actualities. It is ideals which keep a nation alive: and when its ideals are exhausted, it dies. It is the constant spurring of the nation to live up to its ideals, and the constant search for still higher ideals, which is the true patriotism.

It must be recognized that these ideals are a

Divine inspiration. Although they are fashioned by the circumstances of a nation, that is not their ultimate explanation; they are given to nations by God. We must have it firmly fixed in our minds that there is a heavenly country, there is an ideal world already existing in God. We are not labouring for some unknown end; we are not simply working out some blind impulse of the Life-force. We are not simply an accident of existence struggling to find our way as best we can to some stable condition and then to vanish as mysteriously as we came. All these secular notions have their inevitable result either in a dreary pessimism, such as the East is tempted to sink into, or that worship of material might which is the great temptation of the West. As St. Paul says in one of his most glorious bits of insight, "we are a colony of heaven"; we are here to bring the heavenly reality, already existing and therefore already possible, to earth.

The national sense of God must be carefully cultivated. There were many things in Israel's conception, both of God and of His calling, which were wrong and had to be battered out of them by national disaster. But it was these things that gave her power to endure. It seems to be thought that since a national consciousness of God so often leads to folly and exclusiveness it would be best to abandon it and have a purely secular patriotism. But there is nothing to correct

a secular patriotism by reference to anything beyond itself, while even a deluded conception of God and a nation's calling does contain within itself the promise of correction. What we have to dread beyond all things to-day is a secular patriotism; it spells everywhere disaster for nations and destruction for humanity.

There is such a Thing as Christian Patriotism.

1. Its laws must, however, be clearly understood.

(*a*) It has distinct limitations.

There can be nothing allowed to remain of an exclusive nature. The Christian doctrine of election, so gravely misunderstood, is not so much an election to salvation as an election to service. If any revelation has come to us which others have not received, it is only that they may receive it through us. And what is true of individuals is true of nations. Any special light that a nation receives, it receives not for itself but for the world. "In thee shall all the nations of the earth be blessed" was the word to Abraham, and it sets the purpose of all selection. Any attempt, therefore, to keep it to ourselves must involve Divine rejection, which will soon be manifested in some historical catastrophe.

There can be no pride in national election; on the contrary, the weight of responsibility for

any special gift must keep that nation humble. We can see this on the religious plane, but we extraordinarily fail to recognize it on the ethical plane; which only shows how dangerous non-religious ethics really are. We pride ourselves on virtues that owe nothing to ourselves. Pride of race is of all prides the most irrational. We may be glad of our race, but we cannot possibly be proud of it. We did not choose where we should be born. We have done nothing to make the inheritance we came into. It does not matter how righteous we are, comparatively or absolutely; if self-righteousness once creeps in, we shall fall far further than those we think beneath us.

It is impossible to enforce our elected mission upon the world. Whatever we have to defend by the sword or propagate by compulsion is either worthless or unreal. When we boast of the superiority of our civilization, our liberties, our character, let us remember that if they are superior other nations ought to want to imitate them, and should not need to be thrashed or threatened or dynamited into it. We have learned this long ago about religion. If our religion is the one hope of the world, it must win its way through the things it offers the human heart, the actual embodiment in the character of its professors, the heroic sacrifice of its evangelists. To see great nations trying to hammer their

opposed ideas of liberty or order into one another is tragic and ridiculous. It means a confession that they do not possess what they boast.

(*b*) Yet it is not without positive contributions. Patriotism must be fitted into something wider than one's own country; it must take its place inside a love of humanity and a citizenship of the world, or forfeit its right to the name. We love our country not in opposition to the rest of humanity, but only as an instrument for the service of mankind.

This patriotism will not lack a real healthy competition with other nations. We shall strive to be the best for the sake of the whole; we shall be anxious to outstrip all others in service for the kingdom of God. It will not be for possession of the earth, but for the gratitude of humanity; not for the dominion of the sword, but for leadership in the things of the Spirit. We shall pride ourselves not upon the names of those who battered our enemies, but on those who bettered the world; not on the heroes which only our own nation can appreciate, but on the saints and deliverers who are the common property of the world and are equally honoured by all.

This patriotism will help us to understand better than anything else the psychology of international relationships. Just because we love our own country so passionately we shall

understand and remember and respect the love which others have for theirs, and we shall therefore avoid those speeches and acts and policies which touch the pride of others. If, as is so often stated, this war is a war of ideas, it will be won by a psychological weapon: by prayer for our enemies; by seeking the kingdom of God; by knowledge of His will.

2. We need to encourage this true patriotism at home.

(*a*) It is rare enough, and war does not create it. When we find political parties which were sharply divided willing to sink their differences because of the need of resisting a common enemy, there should not be too much made of this. We ought to ask rather why those parties could not agree as to what was best for the country in times of peace. When we hear of people who for the first time in their lives pay income tax without a grumble because it goes to help win a war, we want to know why they did not rejoice in it when it went to educate our children and to secure some decent support for our aged poor. Otherwise it looks as if the newly discovered unity were only concern for our skin.

The determination which will preserve our nation through this crisis is the resolve to make England a better country. Ought it not to be possible to find money after this for rebuilding our towns with a little more concern for freshness

and beauty? If men have fought for this land, ought there not to be some provision for seeing that they have free access to it and security of tenure so long as they employ it for communal production? Would it not be just as well to encourage the allotment cultivation in the future as part of a real contribution every man ought to make, so that we should become self-supporting?—not in fear of future wars, but as the indispensable foundation of a healthy life.

We ought to recover the old battle-cry, "St. George for Merrie England!" with an emphasis on the "merrie." It is a pity that our patron saint is of such doubtful historicity and the one exploit for which he is most celebrated frankly mythical; for the feeling of our dependence upon the unseen world and on the intercession of those who played the heroic part and lived the saintly life would be a great gain. What is true, if anything, in his legend is that which we choose to forget, namely that he died for refusing to use military power against the persecuted Christians. But the story of the dragon might serve to remind us that man's great enemies are not men, but monstrous ideas which devour our youth and perverted appetites which claim many a maiden for their prey; and it is these dragons that have to be slain.

(*b*) But there is England's work for humanity to be considered.

We have had great ideals voiced by some in this

dreadful conflict, though they have been all too easily corrupted by careless politicians, secret treaties, and commercial patriotism. It will take considerable trouble to live up to some of those ideals; but since they have been uttered, let us at least try to keep the nation true to them.

There is still a work which we can do, even in the face of all that seems so unpromising in the present mental condition of our enemies. I believe it would be of immense service if all secret treaties were to be openly repudiated, if we were to state, not our war aims but our peace aims: the sort of world that we look forward to—the League of Nations, general disarmament, freedom of commerce, and the securing for all nations of equal rights in the councils of the world. We are great enough and free enough for this.

And if we perish, if we go down before our enemies, if such an effort should only be met with the cry that we are yielding and our complete subjection be attempted, we can be confident that all that is best in our ideals will not be lost, but will only dominate men the surer from the grave. If the ideals of Greece and Rome still hold the world when their Empires have long since disappeared; if the dreams of Israel still inspire when they are no more a nation; if Jerusalem, now only a heap of huddled hovels on a hill of debris, could have inspired the idea of the Jerusalem above which is free, the Jerusalem

which is yet to descend to earth beautiful as a bride, the tabernacle of God, and the home of man; let us pray that our name shall descend to distant ages as the land where there was laughter because there was liberty, where there was freedom because there was faith, where, even if we did not always live up to Christian professions, we sent out many a noble soul to publish the story of Christ; so that if in the past the land of Judah has been connected with the name of Jehovah, in the future England shall be linked with the name of Jesus, the future King of humanity, the sole Monarch of a united world.

The Meaning of the Ascension

"And he led them out until they were over against Bethany: and he lifted up his hands and blessed them. And it came to pass while he blessed them, he parted from them, and was carried up into heaven. And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy."—LUKE xxiv. 50–52.

THE story of the Ascension is felt to be full of difficulties for modern thought—difficulties which involve in doubt, not only this incident, but, by implication, the whole narrative of the post-Resurrection appearances of Christ. The Ascension is really the crux of the Resurrection story, and yet it is very rarely faced with sufficient boldness and candour. Let us, then, note what the difficulties are.

If the body of Jesus was raised from the tomb the question must then be faced as to what finally became of it. The question is answered with curious confidence and naïveté in the Fourth Article in the Prayer Book: "Christ did truly rise again from death, and took again His body, with flesh, bones, and all things appertaining to the perfection of Man's nature; wherewith He ascended into Heaven." But immediately there occurs to every one who reads that statement two apparently insuperable objections. First, a physical body has no place in the spiritual order: "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom

of God." Second, an *ascension* implies the old system of astronomy, which pictured the earth as a level plain with heaven located somewhere above our heads. With the Copernican system, which conceives this earth as a ball rolling round the sun and the whole system whirling through infinite space, the idea of a body rising from the earth in order to ascend to heaven becomes entirely meaningless.

It is admitted that, as presented in the Epistles, the idea of the Ascension of Christ into a state of glory and His reign in the spiritual order is magnificent, and as a moral and spiritual fact can be apprehended by faith. But everything is spoiled by the attempt to picture this in physical terms, which only raises difficulties that cast doubt upon the historical veracity of the Evangelists.

Moreover, it is noted by critical scholars that the story has very slight foothold in the Gospels. Our Markan ending is admitted not to be the original. Matthew and John give no story of the ascension at all; which is therefore to be found only in Luke. And it is even doubtful there. As the Revised margin will inform you, there is good manuscript authority for omitting "and was carried up into heaven." Whence we have only the narrative in the early chapters of Acts, where a rather materialistic atmosphere seems to prevail. May we not therefore think that the spiritual fact of the Ascension, made known only by revelation and a matter for faith alone, has been translated into material language by St. Luke, which we can therefore disregard? The trouble is, if we accept this explanation, whether it does not bite farther back into the

Gospels than we can willingly allow. Under a rigorous application of the same principle the whole of the Resurrection narrative begins to disappear. Nor can the process be stayed even at the grave of Christ; for the theory is immediately forthcoming that the whole Gospel story is merely a material representation of spiritual facts; the Incarnation only a personification of an idea true spiritually or universally, but not historically and individually in any one person.

But neither is there any halting place here, though the exponents of the myth theory do not seem to be aware of it. You can press the theory to mean that the spiritual can never materialize, and then the material world has no real existence: a philosophy that is as intellectually bankrupt and as morally confusing as blank materialism.

We are bound therefore to retrace our steps and look at the facts again. We must acknowledge that the Gospels are not apparently interested in the question as to the relation of the physical to the spiritual; and they are unaware of our difficulties about the solar system and our finding a place for heaven and a way there from this planet which is rushing through space apparently without direction. But what we must also notice is that the resurrection faith is not merely the conviction that Jesus is alive and that immortality of the soul has been demonstrated by a series of visions, but something much more triumphant and thrilling: that he is Lord of all worlds, which is evinced by His new powers over both the spiritual and physical realms. The facts upon which this knowledge is based are not reported in such a way as

to raise no difficulties or to meet all the questions we should like to ask. We have to rest content with the psychologic certainty that the facts were equal to the faith built upon them—facts in which the moral and material realities were harmoniously reconciled and completely manifested. We can safely assume a general truth in the story and see whether it can be fitted into any scheme of things, or whether any intelligible scheme of things cannot be constructed with this as our basis.

THE ASCENSION MUST THROW SOME LIGHT UPON THE RELATION OF THE SPIRITUAL AND THE PHYSICAL.

1. What are those relations generally conceived to be?

(*a*) Philosophy seems to be unable to offer us much help.

If we start with the fact of thought (and we must, for without it we could not conceive even a materialistic philosophy), then the difficulty is to get from pure thought to the existence of material things; and the temptation is to believe that things are simply the creation of our imagination. This theory makes us the creators of the world we see; and it carries with it the happy suggestion that what is evil in the world is purely the effect of our own imagination, and can therefore be banished simply by our thinking rightly. Why it should not be equally inferred that the good we see is only imagination I do not know; there seems much more in life to support that. Reality is hard and cruel, and the rest is dream.

If we start from matter as the sole origin of

things, then the emergence of mind is equally inexplicable. It can give no assurance of the permanence or the final triumph of mind; and since mind is only a form of matter, the theories that the mind forms are not an independent and impartial witness, and even our materialistic theories are as worthless as any other. This point need not be laboured further, since for those who are able to follow the discussion materialism as a theory of life has been beaten out of court.

Most minds are content to remain in the healthy dualism that there are two things, mind and matter, spiritual and physical facts, and how they are related they do not bother. They are always together; we can never find one single fact or event or phenomenon in which they are not connected; they interact the one upon the other, though how can neither be conceived nor discovered. This dualism is complicated by the fact that by spiritual is mostly meant two still quite distinct things. It may mean a merely non-material existence; but in religion, for instance, it means in addition a certain quality of a moral nature, and how this is related either to the non-material or the material we have hardly begun to inquire. We have therefore the following categories: the material, which needs no further definition; the non-material—that is, an existence of pure spirit which needs no material basis; the moral or spiritual, in the religious sense, a quality which attaches to certain spirits and is manifested in their material actions. But there is no philosophy of this trialism; it has remained unsolved; and many people are not even aware that it needs to be solved.

(*b*) We have to turn to other realms of thought. There are the speculations which have been thrown out by various teachers and movements. They can offer no basis of proof apart from assertion, and they are often discredited because they are mixed up with a mass of ideas which are obvious nonsense. There is the staggering assertion of Swedenborg that God has a body. This seems to deny the idea that God is spirit; but it need not. To be spirit really means to be conscious mind and personality, and, in the New Testament sense, to be spirit of a certain quality, namely goodness. Now, Swedenborg says that when God made man in His own image the human body was part of that image. Let the assertion stand; it will probably seem all the more true to many just because it is unorthodox.

There are the speculations which have been built up in Theosophy and Spiritualism. What exactly is meant by the astral body of theosophic teaching and wherein it differs from the etheric or mental body I cannot follow; but roughly the idea is that there is attached to this physical body another body, not normally visible, but which, when visible, can be discerned to consist of a much more rarefied material, somewhat of the appearance of light. The two bodies are sufficiently connected for the astral body to have some resemblance to the physical body, and it is held that for some time after death it is the body through which we can still make ourselves visible on the physical plane.

But much more astounding than these assertions and speculations has been the discovery of the electric constitution of matter. This

revolutionary discovery of science briefly amounts to this: matter, which was once held to consist of atoms, the smallest, fixed, indivisible portions of any element, has now been analysed further into something that is invisible, intangible, imponderable; pure points of force which by their coming together create the properties of matter which we know as size, weight, impenetrability. This astonishing discovery means that the definitely discoverable basis of the material is practically non-material, and that the transition from the one to the other can in some instances actually be detected in process. If we knew the secret we could disintegrate the whole visible world into invisibility, perhaps in a flash. I know of nothing that so staggers the mind when once it is realized; indeed, it can hardly be realized; yet nevertheless, it is fact, and the Epistle to the Hebrews is proved literally true when it says: "That which is seen hath not been made out of things which do appear."

2. The Ascension may well have been a manifestation in accordance with some of these laws.

(*a*) We must recognize that we are in the realm of speculation.

The New Testament does not provide us with the material for a scientific study of the nature of the resurrection body of Christ. That was not the purpose of the writers and they were not equipped for this task. We cannot ask that they should have been supernaturally preserved from all error common to ordinary honest testimony. There are some things that seem to us inconsistent with other statements, or with the general narrative: such as that Jesus ate

and drank; or even that He said He was not a spirit and had flesh and bones; but in view of the present state of opinion we shall be less and less inclined to force our views of what is consistent or even scientific upon the narrative. But it is not too much to say that there is sufficient here to assure us that we are not moving in the realm of invention or impossible imagination. The resurrection body of Christ was not of quite the same order as an ordinary human body. It appeared and disappeared; it entered a room where there was no ordinary means of admission; and if we are to try to fit together the various appearances, we have to assume that distance was traversed without the time needed for the movements of an ordinary body. At the same time the body was not phantasmal; it had many of the qualities of an ordinary body; although the resemblance was not immediately detected, identity with the physical body that had been crucified could be established by sight and touch.

If we take the electric theory of matter to help us, there is nothing inconceivable in the idea that the physical body of Christ was disintegrated and built up again into a body of another order. At present we can only observe matter breaking up into its constituent electrons gradually. We are therefore still in the presence of a miracle in the transformation of Christ's body in so short a time; but it is not a miracle that need break any laws. It may be also that the phenomenon we know as the Ascension was simply the further transformation of that body into some still higher form, which St. Paul speaks of as "the body of His

glory." The actual transition from one sphere to another might entail visible movement, though here the literal descriptiveness of the narrative in Acts need not be minutely insisted on. We can perhaps understand the cloud that received Him out of sight.

(*b*) But much greater things are involved for our thought of God.

We are being slowly moved from the idea that space and matter belong only to this sphere and have no sort of analogy in the spiritual world. The form of matter is no longer fixed: its basis being of the nature of light and energy, it must be able to act across great tracts of space. The difference between spirit and matter remains, but the complete opposition has gone; the inertness, fixity, deadness, which made it so poor a medium for spirit, are shown to be not inherent.

We are relieved at once of all the burden of dualism which has so vexed the ages and the necessity for taking refuge in either of the barren monisms. Spirit and matter are both the creation of God, who is spirit in the higher sense than the merely invisible. The creation of matter is no longer looked upon as something of the nature of a fall; and we have no longer to consider the difficulties of positing a certain time for the commencement of creative activity. The whole material world is kept in existence, not by things remaining dead but by everything being very much alive; while at the same time this actual world may be only one of the forms that a material universe can take. Creation is a perpetual energy, and creation may therefore be as eternal as God. Nothing can be destroyed,

but only the creative activity of God directed in another way.

All idea therefore of matter as something evil, with its pernicious and confusing deductions, can be banished. While we know that other worlds than this are possible and are probably even now existing, we can believe that they are related to this, because they spring from the same mind and go back to the same creative force. We need not therefore be anxious to precipitate any change or seek after curious transformations. Christ has revealed the other world ; and we know that, while it is more glorious than this, it does not simply condemn this world or treat it just like a cast-off garment. The whole idea of the Resurrection is relieved both from crude materialism and from the chilly negation of a disembodied spiritualism.

It Gives Confidence for the Representation of Humanity in the Godhead.

1. There is a greater concern than material transformation ; it is that of moral supremacy.

(*a*) Whatever the miraculous element in Christ, it is linked with His moral character.

Jesus is not a mere thaumaturge ; He is not some magician, who understands the occult side of life ; He is not even a scientist before His time, who knows more of the laws of nature than we, and can operate them. Whatever knowledge of that kind He may have possessed, He came at it neither by supernatural endowment nor by esoteric instruction, but by moral purity. For whether other people can or cannot do the wonders He did, whether other types of thought

can discover the material laws by which He worked and by which He was transfigured, raised from the dead and exalted to the right hand of God, it remains clear that there is missing from these His great moral purity and power.

We may be sure that by this moral insight Jesus penetrates farther into the secret of existence than occultism or pure science ever can, and that without this purity of heart they may only become delusive and dangerous. Think of the science we know to-day and are using simply to torture and destroy. We have seen that behind the realm of pure spirit, immaterial existence, there is still another order, that of pure morality, goodness, holiness, which is as far above the non-material as that is above the material. It is from this fontal power of God which is goodness, and goodness only, that all things come; and all things only remain in their balance and security when that original connection is left unbroken. It is the endeavour to discover, without the aid of God, and to use, without His sanction, His wonderful powers that is devastating the world to-day.

But we can be equally thankful that in Christ we have the assurance that perfect purity *is* linked with perfect power; that there is not that division between the spiritual and the material which makes the material more easily the prey of evil, against which the good has to utter only an ineffectual protest or voice an unrealizable aspiration. There is no might without morality; there is no morality without might. Christ is Lord of all worlds because He is worthy to be trusted with them. He has secured all power

because He has proved Himself able to do without it. He alone can be trusted in its exercise because with Him goodness and knowledge go together.

(*b*) Christ represents in the Godhead the material side of existence. He is the Author of the world. It was through the Word that the worlds were made. Material existence takes its rise and operation through Him. The New Testament destroyed the myth of a wicked Demiurge at the Cross, when it declared that the same hand which was nailed there was the hand that made the world. And remember, it is that faith which not only gives us trust in this life of ours, but contains the sanction that all science and all art have their true place within the Christian scheme. Outside it they have no foothold; as we have already seen, science abdicates its purpose and regards itself as only a series of guesses, if not only a complex system of delusions; art goes raving mad trying to create from its own mind some absurd thing that has never existed and never deserves to; medicine becomes materialistic and perverted, and provokes the extreme reaction which dismisses the whole thing as charlatanry, and the pains it would relieve as the creation of mortal mind, and therefore non-existent.

But Christ is more than the creator of the material. He has assumed flesh. It was not enough that He should create. He must become incarnate. He must live in the world that He has made and man has so perverted, and show how life was meant to be lived and how even under the worst conditions it can be a triumph. But even the Incarnation must not be temporary:

the flesh must be transformed and carried up to God.

2. What does this assumption of the body mean ?

(*a*) There are many expressions for the body of Christ.

We are able to hold that what has been eternally true of the Word, what was assumed in the Incarnation, has some permanent place in God. If it be crude and misleading to say with Swedenborg that God is a man and has a body, we are able to say with reverence that God contains humanity and has a bodily manifestation. Sometimes the universe has been called the body of God, and there is a sense in which that is true ; but we can believe that there is some glorious resemblance between the body of God and the body of humanity ; that the flesh we wear is no unclean, fallen, and temporary thing, but provides in some transfigured form that which it is not unworthy of the Godhead to wear, and which forms no hindrance but rather a perfect medium through which Absolute Spirit can function. The body of Christ's ascension is the body of God's eternal manifestation. We who have missed the lowly glory of His incarnation are not to be deprived of a sight which shall gladden our eyes ; we shall behold His face, and shall be satisfied. We perhaps cannot even imagine what is meant by " the body of His glory." John describes it in the Apocalypse : with a face like the sun and eyes like a flame of fire and a voice like many waters. All such description must fail and be regarded as only symbolical ; but I like to think that all the beauties of nature which have been created through Him are there gathered up to make His

body; that all we have ever seen shining in the face of youth or gleaming through the eye of man will there go to make up "that one Face" which

> "far from vanish, rather grows,
> Or decomposes but to recompose,
> Become my universe that feels and knows."

And there will be retained there in most special beauty the face He wore on earth, to which sorrow added the touch without which beauty is incomplete, and He will wear, shining like rubies in the sunlight, the precious wounds, at sight of which the angels ever worship and the redeemed for ever sing.

There is the use of the term for Christian people who have become united to one another in love and to their Head. We think of what glory it is to belong to that body; we hardly dare to think of what it may mean to Christ to have such a body as this. He must suffer in it; He must be broken in it; He must know endless pain because of what the members suffer; and yet it is the body He chooses and through His Divine thought will yet knit together and cause it to pulse with health and power.

There is the use of it for the bread and wine He set apart to convey to us more than food, His grace and His love. I want all these meanings as I grow in the understanding of what Christ signifies for heaven and humanity and earth. The whole world is taken up into Christ and therefore into God.

(*b*) We can rest in the thought of what this means for us.

There is perfect understanding of our humanity in God; an understanding gained, not by omniscience, not by creation, not by immanence, but by the full sharing of our life with its limitations, temptations, sorrows, and strife. There can be no feeling of our being ruled by an absentee and arbitrary monarch, by an Olympian and uncaring Deity. What we know in God, what we worship in God, is the Divine humanity; and in that Divine humanity all things are summed up, whether human or Divine, whether of earth or of heaven. We have the most perfect representation of our nature within the Godhead Itself; the most enthusiastic humanitarian cannot ask for more; and no other system can give us so clear a recognition as this. It is this humanity carried up to Godhead that gives the Saviour His touch with all mankind. If we dare to take the words that we are His body in a real sense, then it does mean that He feels what we feel, that there is no physical pain, no material necessity that is alien to His sympathy and unknown to His concern.

This is especially a truth for to-day. In the frightful carnage of this war all human appeal is stopped by the mad determination of the peoples to destroy one another, by the fact that the destinies of the world are in the hands of those who are not suffering themselves, and by that fatal psychological limitation of the human mind by which the anguish which is being suffered cannot be summed up, and cannot therefore make any corporate appeal. Each man suffers in himself alone; no one knows what another suffers; and no one can imagine what all are suffering. Therefore we go on in sheer blindness and lack of feeling;

callousness grows, hate feeds on the tales of horror, deeds are glorified by carefully shutting out the savagery and the suffering they entail; and there is an end to all those natural appeals which suffering makes and was intended to make. Yet if it is true that Christ is the Head, and humanity His body, *He* knows and feels, and there is the one hope of the world.

Those who are part of His conscious body, the Church, which ought to be the nerve-centre of humanity, will naturally share in the sorrows of the Head, and through His Divine consciousness will enter into some fellowship with His sufferings and keep alive their sense of pity, the healthy judgment which is alive to pain and will seize every chance to bring it to an end. They cannot see any other member of this sacred body suffer and not feel it. The sense of common humanity will dominate everything else; the fact of common suffering will give to them an entirely different outlook. It will not matter that they are Germans or Austrians that suffer, but only that they are men, women, and children. It is because our Divine Head feels that, we must feel it too; and when once we begin to feel we shall begin to think sanely; and when once we begin to think, we shall be able, in the name of our Exalted Head, to call the members of the body to cease from their fratricide, to seek reconciliation on the only possible basis, repentance for the suffering imposed on Christ, and recognition of what all mankind were meant to be: brothers in Christ and members of His sacred Body.

Colour in Religion

"The manifold [Gr. *many-coloured*] wisdom of God."—EPHESIANS iii. 10.

MANY students have believed that they could detect in the Epistle to the Ephesians the influence of Rome upon the Apostle, for it was probably during his captivity there that it was written. There is abundant evidence that Paul responded very quickly to his surroundings. As we know, he was deeply stirred by Athens, though, because of the idolatry they implied, he was incapable of appreciating many of its artistic glories; yet his speech on Mars' Hill is certainly marked by a sympathetic approach to the Greek mind. It was only natural that Rome should impress him more easily; for he was a Roman citizen, and its genius was nearer akin to his own mind. He had always longed to see Rome, and, although he was brought there in chains, and to be tried for his life, nothing is allowed to diminish the sense of triumph that his wish has been realized and the standard of the Faith has been planted in Cæsar's household.

He was impressed with the Imperial power, the genius that could hold so many races under its sway. If, when he was writing to the Romans, he admired somewhat too hastily the *magisterium* and the sword by which that power was exercised,

when he reached Rome itself and found that *magisterium* circumscribing his movements and that sword he had thought of only as directed against evildoers now hanging over his own head. he was still able to discern both the need and the possibility of the power of Christ, working along different lines and with utterly different weapons, to create an Empire vaster than any Rome had ever known—the Empire of the Church, a temple in which humanity could worship, a body through which Christ could rule the world. Whether he could detect the coming decay of the Imperial power, or whether it was by contrast he came to see how much more majestic was the Cross and how much more binding loyalty to Christ, it was here that he began that ideal construction of the Church which, in the actual course of history, was to fall heir to the Roman power, and which, when freed from confusion between the method of Christ's sovereignty and Cæsar's, is yet to gather to herself all humanity and supersede worldly government by the Kingdom of God.

But there was another idea influencing Paul's thought and balancing his conception, so that it should never be confused in the way in which the Church which delimits her Catholicism by the adjective "Roman" has been all too prone to do—namely, the need for reconciling unity with variety. The city of Rome had become entirely cosmopolitan; within it were gathered men from all over the known world, bringing with them their differing minds and their strange creeds. She was being invaded by the gods of the East, and religions that were dying elsewhere came here

to find a new lease of life. Instead of being appalled by this confusion, Paul was not only the more determined to win this varied crowd for Christ, but he became increasingly aware that Christ contained width enough to hold them all. The mystery that was revealed to him in Rome was that the Gentiles were fellow-heirs, fellow-members of the body, and fellow-partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the Gospel. And here in Rome "Gentiles" did not simply mean non-Jews; the term had come to have a positive significance and to be filled with vaster meaning: for it included all those nations with which the streets of Rome were teeming. And, looking at their infinite variety and, perhaps, at their richly coloured garb, Paul realized that their need could only be matched in the unsearchable riches of Christ and the manifold wisdom of God.

As he searched round for a word to describe this infinite variety which was to be found in the mind of God, he lit on a rare Greek word, and I cannot help thinking that its original meaning carried, even if unconsciously, some attraction to his mind: "many-coloured," varied it is, for it pictures a garden glowing with the colours of all kinds of flowers.

It takes Colour to Express the Mind of God.

1. That is sufficiently shown in nature.

(*a*) When God said, "Let there be light," it involved, Let there be colour. We know that light, and especially the light of the sun, is not

only the source of illumination, but the cause of colour. All things are black at night; but, concealed within the welcome light which the sun flings over the world, every conceivable colour has to be blended to produce that glorious golden light. The prism, refracting a ray of sunlight, reveals the six or seven colours of which it is composed. But our earth acts as a prism, each substance absorbing all the rays save one, and, flinging this back, the whole visible world appears to us clothed with a hundred hues and tints. All things take what they need of the rays of light for their life, and the rest they return in colour.

But the most astonishing thing is that all this feast of glory is not only dependent upon light and upon the differing absorbent properties of various substances, but also upon the eye of man. There is no colour without light; but there is also no such thing as colour without the human eye. Colour is simply a sensation transmitted to the mind by the eye, the external cause of which is the difference in wave-length of the various rays of light. What without the eye is simply a mathematical difference, with the eye becomes translated into the almost endless variety we call colour. Just as, without the prism, light remains white, so it would without the wonderful mechanism of the retina. Any one can easily be convinced of the subjectivity of colour by observing that a rainbow is only in your eye, for the rainbow moves with the beholder, and the observer appears to be always standing before the centre, and at a fixed distance from it.

The scientific facts underlying all this are of curious and still largely unexplored significance. The colours seem to be reducible to three primaries, though there is no agreement as to whether they are to be identified as red, yellow, and blue, or red, green, and blue; these, by mixing, expand to the seven colours we can see in the spectrum, though most people can only distinguish six. Yet there are mathematical reasons for believing there are seven. But in nature and by human art these colours can be increased to about two hundred different discernible tints. The mathematical measurement of these differing wave-lengths of light shows that they are governed by a definite ratio, and that this corresponds to the ratio which dominates the sensation of sound; so that both harmony of colour and harmony of sound depend upon similar correspondences. Beyond these facts there are interesting speculations and assertions. Some musicians declare that the sensation of sound is accompanied with them by a sense of colour. Others assert that they can detect about persons an aura which betrays their mood or their moral character. It is possible also that the eye might be trained, not only to see more tints within the scale of the spectrum than at present the most practised can distinguish, but to see colours which lie outside the spectrum. We know there are rays—notably ultra-violet rays—which convey no sense of colour to us, but which have extraordinary chemical powers.

(*b*) But the chief purpose of colour must be for joy.

The joy which we have in nature is largely due

to the glory and diversity of its colouring. The three great canvases of earth and sky and sea offer opportunities for endless gradations of colour. The dominant colour of earth is green, but how many shades of green there are when the foliage first appears, who will dare to say? The day begins and ends with colours that play round the red end of the spectrum, and through all the hours between try what can be done with the possibilities of blue. The restless sea takes from the bed where it sleeps and from the sky that it mirrors the colours of their palettes and riots with them through the whole scale of the spectrum. So every day, when the sun is shining, nature plays pageant before our eyes, the costumes changed with every hour, the tone varied with every passing cloud.

And the accompanying sensation of all nature's colouring is pleasure. There is nothing so pleasing to the eye as pure colour; its depth and constancy arouse a sense of satisfaction; the constant variety and change bring delight, and the contrasts which in nature never fail to harmonize stir great founts of joy within the mind. But the pleasure which colour gives is as various as colour itself. The greens and blues are quieting, the reds and yellows stimulating; and every colour has a corresponding feeling and moral equivalent.

Perhaps one of the most remarkable facts about colour is the increased discrimination and appreciation which can be secured by training. There is evidence that man has, within historic times, developed the sense of colour. It has

often been noted how deficient the Greeks were in the sense of colour: it cannot be due to poverty of description, but must be traced to undeveloped colour-sense. When they describe the sea as wine-coloured, we think we are having a rather exaggerated description of the purple the sea can sometimes assume; but when ivy is described in the same way, we know something is wrong; and this is confirmed by their description, not only of the grass, but of the sand of the sea-shore as verdant! Here is a developing sense which probably has no limitation of the joy it can give. I know a man who is quite colour-blind; the whole world looks to him like a photograph; yet he declares himself unable to believe that it could possibly look more beautiful. What we are content with should not measure what is possible. While the possibility of pain is finite, the possibility of joy must be infinite.

2. The notion of colour is essential to religion.

(*a*) You cannot picture the mind of God without using colour.

It is no doubt true, both in painting as in thought, that form should be regarded as more essential than colour. We must labour to get our thought defined and orderly: there must be theology. But while primary, it is not plenary; while essential, it is not the whole. You cannot sketch the mind of God in black and white: there must be colour: and the colour must be *manifold*. You must, therefore, be able to add to your thought of God that which corresponds to colour in nature, namely, that which has the effect of satisfaction, delight, and joy. If the thought of God does not produce

that sensation, then you have not reached the whole truth about God. So you must take to express your conception of God, not only thought, which is the black and white medium, but you must take music and poetry and painting, and especially painting.

It is no accident that Christianity has been the special inspiration of painting. Why the typical classical art was sculpture while the typical Christian art has been painting, has sometimes been explained as due to the sensuousness of classicism and the spirituality of Christianity: for drawing is able to get on with two dimensions where sculpture needs three. But surely this is not the real distinction. Is it not rather that the statue is cold and colourless, and is really untrue to nature, and that painting is warm and coloured, and gets its outline, as nature does, not by black lines of demarcation but by gradation of colour? Therefore a Crucifixion by Fra Angelico will tell you something about the Cross no theory of the Atonement can convey; and the Sistine Madonna will tell you something about the mystery of why God became man that no treatise on the Incarnation can explain.

We find colour greatly honoured in our Bible. It was employed in the worship of the Old Testament, and still further employed in the worship that grew out of the New. Scarlet and purple and gold flashed across the white in the Tabernacle and the Temple. Jesus rejoiced over the flowers because they surpassed the gorgeous robes of Solomon, thus praising for the first time in history the gorgeous colouring of the flowers, but noticing

what many have not yet observed, that the colours of nature are always purer and brighter than anything pigment or dye can produce. Pictures are frequently condemned as being too brightly coloured; but the slightest comparison with nature will show that they are really dull and lifeless; crude, if you will, badly harmonized, but never too pure or bright. It is in the Book of Revelation that a great use is made of colour in order to depict the joys of heaven. There is the opalescent sea of glass mingled with fire, and the river with the trees on the banks ever green and always in fruit, and the rainbow round about the throne, but all obvious symbols of variety and joy. In the jewelled walls and gates and foundations it is surely not only preciousness that is being emphasized but colour, the very pure colour which you get in precious stones, in the iridescence of the pearl, or in the glistening rays of crystal.

(*b*) There is some deep connection between religion and colour.

We must take its very presence in this world at all as the revelation that the mind of God is stored with infinite variety and joy. God wishes his children to be full of delight and radiant with pleasure; and of this the special sign is colour. The rainbow is set in the sky, not only as a promise that the world shall not be destroyed, that human life shall not come to naught, but to indicate what is still more important, that there are such exhaustless capacities of joy that life can go on for ever without end or satiety. Colour serves no utilitarian purpose; the economy of nature could

have done without it, for it is only a subjective impression. But it is an extra, and an extra which shouts to us that God is love.

It is not surprising that some symbolic meaning should have been found in the different colours, though some of the suggestions made are anything but helpful. I cannot bear to think, for instance, that any colour really represents anything evil, as in the description of auras it is made to do. The only symbol of evil is black—that is, the absence of colour. Here surely the judgment of Dante is true. His hell is colourless, full of dull volcanic rock, the darkness not the deep restful purple of night, but the sad stain of smoke and swampy vapours. As you pass from the purgatory to the Earthly Paradise, the first thing that marks the change is the employment of colour, not only the colour of the grass and glades, all spangled with flowers, but the colours in the pageant of the Church which he witnessed. The gryphon that draws the chariot is white and gold and crimson—the gold for the divine nature of Christ, the white for His sinless humanity, glowing with the blood of His passion. The three maidens who dance at the wheel are the theological virtues, and they are dressed in white, green, and red, for they represent faith, hope, and charity. For myself, I should prefer to have made them the three primaries—red, because faith was won for us through blood; yellow for hope, for it is the hope of glory; and blue for love, because it is the colour of the sky that overreaches all. But I am sure that these must be the three colours which Dante saw develop within the one pure ray of

the Godhead: Blue for the Father, Red for the Son, Gold for the Holy Ghost.

Therefore you had better test your religion by the colour there is in it. Believe that God is One, one pure light, but that this light owes its glory to the fact that it is composed of three wonderful colours. But while you must have a religion which is full of colour, see that the colours harmonize again into one, and do not simply flare out in barbaric riot. If you have to choose a particular variety within the religion that holds your loyalties, and you have the offer of "penny plain, or twopence coloured," save up your money and get the coloured variety. Give me a religion that worships God with all the colours He gave us.

This Manifold Wisdom of God is to be Made Known through the Church.

1. It is clear why this should be the work of the Church.

(*a*) The Church must show forth beauty in variety.

The Church was to take the place of the Roman Empire, to gather into its bosom all the nations of the world, to satisfy the need of every human heart, and to unify all human aspirations. But this was not to be done as the Roman Empire had attempted it, by coercing every one into uniformity, but to show how God had some great design in creating the multitudinous variety of humanity (not only the racial diversities, but the infinitely varying types and temperaments) by

revealing the place they were meant to occupy in the harmony of the whole.

St. Paul has provided us with many metaphors for setting forth the nature of this union and harmony, each of them insisting upon the dual facts of diversity and unity; but there is one contained in this word "many-coloured" which might have been developed with great profit. The various nations and the different types correspond to the different colours. So far from being irreconcilable, they were made to complement one another; for they are all derived from the one light, that is broken up into its constituent colours for the increase of our joy. This explains the vari-coloured foundations of the eternal city: built from every type of our multitudinous humanity.

But perhaps there is no more beautiful image possible than that of a garden where each flower is allowed to make its contribution of colour and beauty, admirable in itself, and yet going to make up a scene of delights. The Church was meant to be Christ's garden, neither, surely, with the different flowers planted out in beds, primly divided off from one another, nor rioting in careless and disordered profusion, but just that which is the greatest pleasure, flowers of all kinds growing together as in an old-world garden, lavish, glorious, and of all kinds and colours, yet making one simple effect of pure and surpassing joy.

(*b*) This must be set forth in its teaching and worship.

It is the duty of the Church's ministry to show how the one truth of God is able to be revealed

in countless colours, turning the prism of theology this way and that, until each pure, delightful colour is flashed upon the eye; to see its varied application, its endless meaning, its inexhaustible treasures; each a coloured loveliness, all sheer loveliness. We have got to show how gay Christianity really is; how from the very tears of men it begets the rainbow; how, when the purposes of God are broken by the rebellion of men, it only wins therefrom the greater beauty.

Its worship will naturally rejoice in colour, and never be contented with black, or with black and white only. Once when I introduced vestments into the church, I tried to quiet certain apprehensions by promising that they should only be white! And I have heard of churches where there has been a "frightful row" over coloured stoles; while different coloured hangings for the Altar have been objected to as going too far. Many of our attempts at colour in church are botchy and ugly; but we ought to admit the principle once for all that we *must* have colours in church, that it *is* the place for pageantry, and that, if our ugly industrialism and inartistic clothing drives all colour out everywhere else, it shall not be allowed to drive it out of the church.

The Church must strike the note of joy, and even gaiety, and dare to strike it now. It is hard enough at this hour; we are tempted to fall into an eternal dirge, drape our altars in black, and let the Church only voice the tears and perplexities that hold all hearts. But we must not; not even in sympathy. The springtime and summer go on still with all their feasts of loveliness and colour,

whatever men are doing across the water; the sea sparkles and keeps up its endless kaleidoscope of colours, although it is stained with murder and alive with unholy devices. But Nature does this all the more to call men back from their murders and their hates. And the Church should persist in proclaiming that men *can* live together in harmony, that life was meant for joy, and, by her very contrast, condemn the scenes of desolation which war is making of the fair green earth.

2. The Church must aim at a many-coloured life.

(*a*) A condemnation of modern life must include its absence of colour.

This will seem entirely secondary to its lack of justice; but the secondary is not the unimportant. Why we know the present order is wrong is that it is drab, dirty, and dull; and we shall know that any proposed change is wrong which is content only with form and leaves no place for colour. Industrialism is obviously wrong, because it blackens the earth and stains the sky, and drives all colour completely out of life. And a bureaucratic democracy will also be wrong if it leaves us with everything regimented and ticketed, but with no room for colour, for individual choice, for common delights and the surprises of joy.

It may be that in time past war served some purpose in God's training of the nations. Ruskin tells us that it was the great inspiration of art. I have my doubts about all that. God may have brought good out of it, but only on the principle that where sin abounded grace did the much more abound. Certainly mediæval war had room for

plumes and painted shields, and not long ago soldiers' tunics were somewhat of an attraction. But all that has gone. Ruskin said war lost all its value the moment it was waged by means of machinery. Certainly the colour has gone out of it; the scarlet coat has gone, and with it its last apology. One might question whether a man could possibly have conscientious objections to putting on khaki, but no one could doubt a man's right to strong æsthetic objections.

(*b*) The kind of life religion inspires must be one that is full of colour.

White is the characteristic colour of purity and sainthood. But you can be under no delusion now that whiteness is the absence of colour; it is the perfect mingling of all the pure colours, that which gives it its glow and sense of brightness. Therefore, if it is saintship you aspire after—and there is no other ambition worth a moment's concern—you must take care that you include all the virtues. People are not canonized because they specialized in one virtue, but because they had all the virtues, and those in an intense and heroic degree. You cannot specialize in the Christian life; you must be perfect as your Father is perfect, and that means holding all the virtues together: for apart they are not virtues at all.

It is your business to adorn the doctrine of God your Saviour. That seems an ambitious and almost irreverent undertaking. And yet it must be done. Doctrines, the great principles of Christianity, have got to be expressed in a life which shows how many-coloured, how infinitely beautiful it is. You must win men and women to your

religion, if at all, not by apologetic, nor by dogmatic, but by æsthetic : the attractions of a fine and lovely character. There must be the basis of truth ; but just because it is truth it must be able to be made beautiful.

Then one day you shall be made ready to see God, made ready by the perfect purity of your heart. For God is neither smoke nor fog, but glorious colour ; and when, at last, His light shines unclouded upon you, it will break into a thousand happy colours, and you will begin that beatific life which is endless joy and inexhaustible pleasure because it is fed from the many-coloured wisdom of the infinite Mind.

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The Christian Principle of Self-sacrifice

"Whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life for My sake and the Gospel's shall save it."—MARK viii. 35.

ONE returns again and again to this haunting word of Christ to see if we can resolve its baffling paradox. Instinctively we are drawn to its hidden truth, and the intellect is restless to get it stated in some clearer form; yet it seems to elude all our efforts. One turns naturally, first of all, to critical and literary analysis to see if we can find there any help.

The saying occurs no less than six times in the Gospels. Three of these occurrences can be reduced to one: for Matthew and Luke simply repeat in the same context the saying as it is found in Mark, with the exception that they both agree in omitting "and the Gospel's." We might suppose that they copied from a later edition of the Gospel than the one we possess, in which there had been made some slight revision, especially of redundancies.

But the same saying occurs a second time in Matthew and Luke; and such cases are gene-

rally referred by scholars to the hypothetical document identified with the "Logia," or known as "Q." But that is difficult here because the wording does not agree and the context is altogether different. In Luke the saying is found in an apocalyptic passage and looks as if it might have been coloured by its context. It seems as if there it is a paradoxical expression of the general truth that the bold course in danger will prove the safest; but this interpretation cannot be carried right through the text. The second occurrence in Matthew makes the saying even more paradoxical: he who finds loses; and he who loses shall find. It is here that we begin to wonder whether the word translated *life* ought not to be translated *soul*; for it would bring out the truth, which seems particularly palatable to the modern mind, that there is a concern for the soul which, because it is selfish, is soul-destroying; but there again you cannot carry that meaning through to the second half of the text: if you really lose your *soul*, you cannot possibly find it.

This examination of the critical position seems to show that the idea was often in the mind of Jesus, and that He gave it various applications.

But it is obvious that the paradox is caused by using one word with two different meanings: the word translated "life" must be taken in a higher and a lower sense in both halves of the

text. The Johannine recension, again in another setting, confirms this: "He who loveth his life loseth it; and he who hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal"; where the saying is rendered as a universal principle and is applied by Jesus to His own self-sacrifice. This simplifies the paradox by making it a question of sacrificing the temporal to the eternal.

Critical and literary analysis does teach us something, and we shall find that we need to use the various shades of meaning in the different expressions of the idea when we come to apply the principle as a guide for life; but this method cannot take us very far. It is life itself that will let us into the secret of this paradoxical principle, if only we are living it for the same ends as that set forth in the Gospels. Do we not know what is meant by a man losing his life to find it, when the youth of Europe is illustrating our text in such a stupendous and magnificent fashion? But it is just at that swift, popular identification that our critical study comes in to call for steadiness and careful discrimination.

The Principle ought to be Clear to us by Now.

1. It has provoked a penetrating ethical discussion.

(*a*) It has been seriously questioned whether *self-sacrifice* is an all-sufficient principle.

Let us suppose a few striking concrete cases. Let us imagine some great statesman, whose presence at that particular moment in the guidance of his country's affairs is particularly desirable, is leaving the House one night and, passing along the Embankment, sees a woman fling herself into the Thames. Without a moment's hesitation he leaps in after her, and manages to support her until help arrives; but while he saves her, he himself succumbs to the exertion and exposure. And let us suppose that the woman is a harlot driven to despair, and that she is saved, only shortly afterwards to repeat the attempt to destroy herself, and this time with success; while at the same time the removal of that statesman's guidance has a tragic effect on his country's fortunes, for the course that he could have prevented is taken, and leads to disaster. Where is the rational justification for such an act?

Take the more common and ordinary case of a mother sacrificing herself for her husband and family. She may have inclinations towards public life, she may have interests in literature or art; but all these she represses, and immerses herself in domesticity. And with a not unheard-of result: a selfish husband and spoiled children, utterly unconscious of the great heroism daily enacted before them. Is that a rationally justified sacrifice?

Take a case involving a moral dilemma. The

husband of a beautiful young wife becomes an invalid, and as resources dwindle, he is left in need of the comforts and helps that might save his life. At last, other sources of appeal having proved useless, in despair she sells herself on the streets in order to get the means to keep her husband alive. But the only result is that he gets worse, and dies having found out what she has been doing, and only putting the worst construction upon her actions. In remorse she continues the life she has adopted, and, having dragged others down with herself, dies in misery and agony. There is sacrifice, even of the moral instinct; but can it be justified?

(*b*) The principle therefore seems to demand some qualification.

We are inclined to admit that circumstances ought to be taken into account; we ought to decide whether the sacrifice will be worth while; we seem bound to attempt some valuation of the life laid down and the life that is to be saved. But then that is precisely what we cannot do. Who can decide whether sacrifice will be effective? If I see a child in front of an approaching train, dare I stop to calculate whether my life is worth more to humanity than the child's might become? If I did, I should certainly be condemned by the general instinct; and there would not be time for such calculations to be made, even if they ought to be.

It has been mildly suggested that self-expression is perhaps a better general principle than self-sacrifice. The self is God's great gift; and it is our duty to make the most of it. We have come to hold most strongly to the sacredness of personality; surely that applies to our own. What better gift can I make to my fellows than my completely developed self? And in pursuit of that I must surely be allowed to see that I have leisure, culture, and the requisite comfort. Then the higher egoism becomes the truest altruism. And yet, who does not see the danger of priggishness in these motives; and who does not know of those who on this plea sacrifice others to their pleasure and service?

The whole idea has been challenged by Nietzsche in the most violent and unqualified fashion. He regards the altruistic motive as poisonous and perverse. It is the corruption which Christianity has poured into the Western mind. Its only result is to make the strong the slaves of the weak, to sacrifice the race of supermen to the common herd, and therefore to diminish the moral stature of the whole. Self is the only and the absolute standard; and everything ought to be sacrificed to that. This brutal opposition makes most people shudder as at something sacrilegious and blasphemous; but its significance has been little understood; while others have toyed with it as an interesting theory, without recognizing what a fire they were playing with.

2. And now the whole question has been lifted beyond academic discussion.

(*a*) It has become the desperate issue of our times.

It is a popular interpretation of this war that it is the conflict between two types of civilization; a deeper interpretation is that it is a conflict between the pagan and the Christian ethic; between egoism and altruism on a world scale.

The selfish ethic has been backed by certain conclusions drawn from evolutionary science. The progress of life is decided by a struggle for existence in which only the fittest survive. It need not be pointed out that this principle, even if absolute, is no guidance for moral action, because its only test of the fittest is those who survive. But undoubtedly a hard reading of the facts of evolution is possible, and has influenced our generation more than we know. In some German writers this tendency has reached its apotheosis in the idea that the State is absolute and its existence the only consideration, and that in case of conflict between races the appeal of superior might is the only way to decide which has the most right to survive. Against this monstrous and pernicious doctrine the rest of the world has taken up arms.

Fortunately we have seen the opposite doctrine of self-sacrifice suddenly appealing to thousands on the other side, who while they have seemed irresponsive to Christianity have suddenly dis-

played its supreme principle in laying down their lives that the world might be free. This sublime dedication, on a scale and at a height the world has never before seen, is naturally praised by all, and it is confidently identified as the Christian principle at length revealing itself in our national life. Men were only waiting for the opportunity to be heroically Christian; and at the call they have all reached the great height of Christ's own standard: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." Not to see this clear-cut issue is felt by most people to indicate moral blindness; and not to take part in this great act of sacrifice is to have made the grand refusal.

(*b*) But the matter is not quite so simple.

Our world has had a very great moral issue thrust upon it; it is written in letters of blood and fire, and no one can evade its challenge; but it is difficult to believe that it is an issue that corresponds to national and racial demarcation. We may admit to the full that for the majority of our people the issue came in this way, and that they have showed the soundness of their soul in being prepared to pay any price to face it. Ignoring the political issues both before and since the war, and speaking of the soul of England and not of the decisions of statesmen, the entrance of our country into this war was one of her greatest acts, if not her very greatest. And if, as a conse-

quence, we go down to the dust, and our Empire is dismembered, it will have been more glorious to end this way than to continue along lines to which many would tempt us.

But the issue is tremendously complicated by the adherence of so many to our cause who cannot be credited with any altruistic motives. The secret treaties; the seizing of the opportunity for commercial exploitation; the backing of certain sections of the Press and public opinion which have always been out for selfish ends—all this is very disquieting, and has had a most demoralizing effect. Along with real moral indignation against the wrongs and atrocities which have occurred in this war, there are obviously plenty of people who rejoice to be able to work up hate, and who want vengeance for its own sake. The story of slaughter is to them a feast of satisfaction; it is not the end for which such dreadful means have to be employed that keeps them on, but the means itself; for destruction is to them a delight.

The issue of egoism or altruism is not at all clear. On the side of the enemy the same sacrifice is being made, however mistaken or blind we may think it to be. Now it was precisely this willingness to sacrifice yourself for the State that Nietzsche regarded as the great corruption, and the pernicious delusion; and it is certainly this that keeps the majority of the enemy at their awful task. Moreover, the sole and immediate

duty of the soldier is not to lay down his life. A general would not be decorated simply for sacrificing a regiment. An Irish recruit being asked if he was willing to lay down his life for his country, said he was not, but he was perfectly willing to help some one else to lay down his life for his country; which showed insight. And none of the countries engaged in this war propose to counter the egoism of the German State by the altruistic sacrifice of themselves.

Can we get a Clearer Line?

1. We shall have to take a wider horizon than the present hour provides.

(*a*) The individual problem must be set in the light of eternal life.

If there is another life, which is measured by quality as well as by quantity; and if the attaining of that life depends upon a certain condition of soul; then what looks like an utterly wasted sacrifice may make all the difference to the enjoyment of that life.

It will be pointed out that many who make such sacrifice have no belief in eternal life; and is not such a sacrifice more wonderful in the case of those who have no hope of immortality? It is; and yet it is impossible to justify it on rational grounds. We are not pleading that the lack of belief in eternal life would eventually put an end

to such sacrifice; for it depends upon an instinct probably stronger than any intellectual conviction, and would persist without or against it. It is rather the existence of such an instinct to which we appeal as the greatest argument for immortality.

With eternal life a reality, we can appraise an act of self-sacrifice by its interior motive. It is what is meant by the sacrifice that determines its value; not what it actually effects. This enables us to praise a sacrifice that we think was a life flung uselessly away, or even to reverence sacrifice like that of Emily Davison, which we might regard as quite mistaken. It is precisely the same with the sacrifice the soldier makes; and this we should extend to cover the cases where it is made without any support from ideal political considerations. Wherever a man is willing to surrender his life on issue, we instinctively feel we are in the presence of a very wonderful exhibition of the nature of the human soul; and rightly. But what remains to be inquired into is the value this sacrifice is to have for humanity; otherwise we are simply resting content with what after all is egoism.

(*b*) If our aim is to benefit humanity, we must have an object higher than humanity.

For instance, the idea that a man must lay down his life for his country *on any issue* is not only immoral and dangerous, it is the curse of humanity; for it provides the greatest support

of war there is. Get men in this frame of mind, and sinister politicians and depraved tyrants will exploit this great instinct to bluster and devastate and enslave. No doubt the existence of conscientious objectors, especially of a purely political kind, is deeply resented by the public, and a great number of them would constitute a serious danger to a modern State. It is often said bitterly: there are no conscientious objectors in Germany. No! but ought there not to be? Whatever we think of them, I am certain that the country which has the greatest number of them is the highest in the scale; and the country without them is a danger to the human race.

It is not even enough to ask a man to sacrifice himself for humanity. We can never be sure what will benefit humanity; what will further or betray progress. Moreover, to sacrifice the individual to society, which is often the only definition of altruism given, is to sacrifice a conscious self to an unconscious entity; and it cannot be argued for on moral grounds. Unless there is something more than humanity; something immanent in humanity, doubtless, but not identical with, not exhausted by, not dependent upon humanity; altruism is irrational. Nietzsche was quite right; and he was in opposition, and could himself find no way out, simply because he knew only a sentimental Christianity.

This all shows how highly important is the

question of conscience and the moral element; though the importance does not lie where it is generally supposed to do. It is not whether a soul risks its existence and happiness by sinning against conscience; the question is, whether you may not save your soul and yet damage humanity. If I do a certain thing against my conscience with the object of benefiting humanity, and thereby risk hell, it is not a real risk for myself, for there is a righteous and understanding God; but I may risk sending others to hell. For instance, the soldier who fights, although it is against his conscience, because he feels humanity comes before his conscience, does not in my opinion lose his soul; but it is questionable what he does for humanity. For the truth is that if this sort of sacrifice could have saved humanity, then history has provided hecatombs of such sacrifices, and the earth must by this time be sodden to its core with the blood of war; and yet the world is not saved.

2. Christianity provides the only escape from this dilemma.

(*a*) The life must be lost for the sake of Christ.

This is a most extraordinary limitation of the doctrine of sacrifice; and if it is not well grounded in reality, it is the most blasphemous saying that any human being has ever uttered. If it is true and right, it solves our problem in the only possible way. To justify sacrifice there must be a per-

sonal object to which the sacrifice is made, and a personal object in whom the benefits of that sacrifice are stored and made effective for application to humanity. If Christ is God; God in man; God in every man; the problem is solved. If not, then the problem is insoluble and self-sacrifice irrational.

Now Christ most wonderfully meets this most critical necessity. Love for Him makes sacrifice unconscious; it carries with it always gain and never loss for the soul; it makes it so instinctive that it can be instantaneous; and it has effect for the redemption of humanity. One example will show how wonderfully this works. The early Christian martyrs laid down their lives on a formal issue of loyalty to Christ; but the effect of that sacrifice was to overthrow for ever the absolutist God-State. It is equally demonstrable that all great sacrifices for conscience, even if on trivial points, have resulted in the purchase of essential liberty for mankind. All the political liberties of this country have come about through the operation of conscientious scruples; and as it has been, so it will be.

When one is completely swayed by love and loyalty to Christ, one is rendered absolutely fearless. You are ready at any moment to risk this life, by life in Him, for life with Him. This frees our sacrifice both from prudential calculation and from the fanatical search for martyrdom.

Notice that the text condemns *seeking* to save one's life; but it does not praise *seeking* to lose one's life. And when a man comes to the issue where life has to be let go, it is only in fulfilment of the inner renunciation of "hating" his life made long ago. We do not have to wait to sacrifice ourselves in some dramatic death: we live *or* die by the one principle.

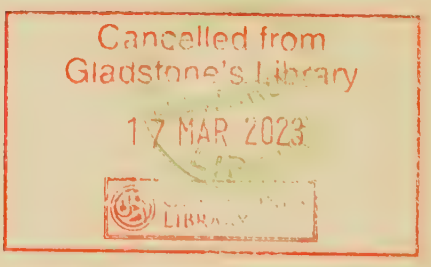
(*b*) This brings the issue clearly before you.

You must find some one to whom you can lose yourself, your soul, your self-concern even for salvation. The assurance of Christianity is not an assurance of being saved, still less of being merely safe: it is an assurance of the Saviour; assurance that in Him you lose yourself to find yourself in Him again, but at a much higher level of life, namely in union with Him.

If you once lose yourself to Christ you may be sure that your life is going to benefit humanity, even if you are never called upon to lay down your life for Christ, or if you die heroically and yet no one knows.

Sacrifice for Christ's sake is effective, because, in Him, Person and Principle are one thing. We have seen that it would seem as if Mark afterwards took out "and the Gospel's"; perhaps because he felt it was redundant: Christ *was* the Gospel. But its standing in our copy serves to remind us that to lose our life for Christ is not to lose ourselves for a blank idea or a meaningless person; it

is to lose ourselves for Him who is the embodiment of the evangelical principle. The great sacrifice is the evangelical sacrifice; the sacrifice for truth and principle; the sacrifice of oneself rather than sacrifice any one else; and *therefore* the redemptive sacrifice, which in union with Him it is our inestimable privilege to be able to make; and so to enter into fellowship with the Cross and share His eternal life.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